

A LITTLE CHAPLET
for
THE QUEEN & ANGELS

B. J. RAYCROFT



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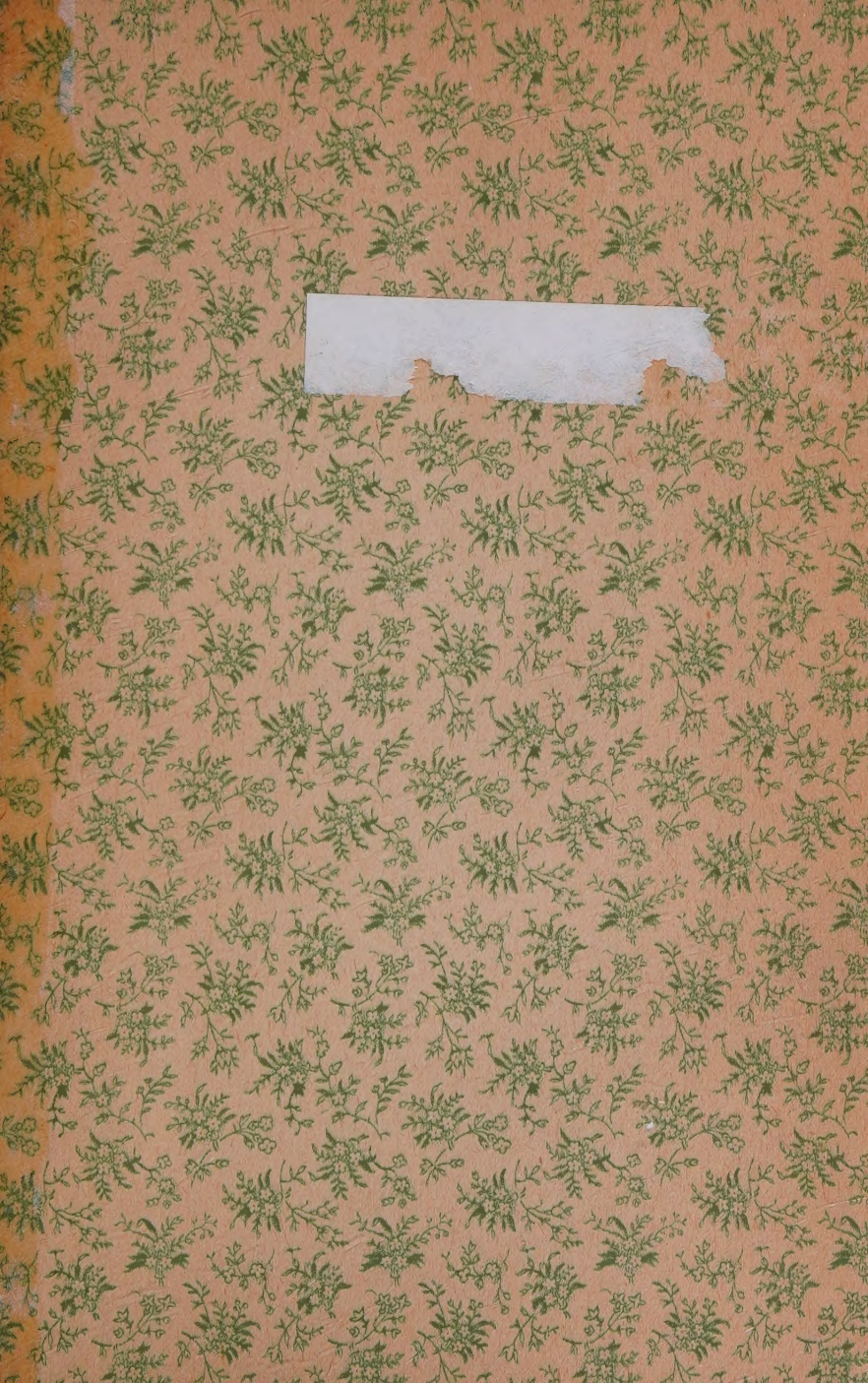
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A LITTLE CHAPLET FOR THE QUEEN OF ANGELS

OR :

A Short Meditation
For Every Evening in May

Dedicated

To Rt. Rev. John E. Fitz Maurice, D. D.,

Bishop of Erie,

The Friend and Patron of Letters,

By the Author

REV. B. J. RAYCROFT, A. M.

SECOND EDITION

Frederick Bustet & Co.

Printers to The Holy Apostolic See and The Sacred
Congregation of Rites

RATISBON ROME NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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✠ RT. REV. JOHN E. FITZ MAURICE,

Bishop of Erie.

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PREFACE

IT has been among the cherishest thoughts of the author to publish a little work in honor of the Queen of Angels. In striving to promote veneration and love for her, he is only a feeble toiler among the countless number of priests who labor to advance her glory and awaken an ardent attachment to her. It may be said that others have accomplished this purpose better than he has, and to this he takes no umbrage. His object is to offer a little tribute to her whose memory is hallowed by the genius and sanctity of ages ; and, if he has not succeeded as well as he wished, none lament the deficiency more than himself does.

Since there are many books for May devotion, the one excuse he may give for the appearance of this little book, is contained in the desire already expressed and in the hope that still there is room for one more. Though in this chaplet he has failed to reach his ideal, he hopes some thoughts contained therein may awaken in the hearts of Mary's children a garland of prayer for the brow of their Queen. If it increase devotion at her altar in May and help some priest to draw souls to the Mother of Jesus, the author will rejoice that this little chaplet for Mary's brow has, by devout hearts, been decorated with the roses of many a Hail Mary.

Preparatory Prayer.

INSPIRE our souls, O eternal Father, with the deepest love for Thee and the most profound veneration for the Mother of Thy divine Son, that we may perform this devotion with attention, humility and love. Elevate our aspirations to Thee, the source of all good, the inspiration of all devout prayer, the reward of every pious effort, the consolation of the weak, the joy of the virtuous, and the hope of the dying. Protect us from distracting thoughts, and infuse into our hearts the spirit of piety that we may be worth to offer Thee our homage and to kneel at the Altar of the Queen of Angels.

We supplicate thee, Mother of our divine Savior, to bear our feeble prayer to the Sacred Heart of thy divine Son. Be our patroness and advocate in heaven. Humbly we ask thee to be mindful of us at the throne of God, for we are needy and weak. We assemble this evening at thy altar to thank thee from the depths of our heart for all thy affectionate care and to adore the Father of heaven for giving thee to us as model and friend. With grateful hearts we thank Him for His blessings to us and for the glory and dignity bestowed upon thee. We rejoice in having thee for our Mother and it is our earnest desire to be ever faithful to thee and thy divine Son.

We consecrate to thee, O holy Virgin, every act of this month and especially of this day. Bear our humble thoughts to the loving bosom of thy Son and our Redeemer. Obtain for us the grace to perform this exercise with piety and love for Him, with gratitude and sympathy for thee. Pray for us that we may be worthy of His promises and that He may protect us from evil of soul and body.

We recommend to thy loving care the whole Catholic Church, our Sovereign Pontiff, our bishop, the priests and religious; our parents, superiors, benefactors, relatives, friends, and enemies, and the souls of the faithful departed.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, kindly deign to listen to our petitions which we unite with those of the faithful on earth and the angels and saints in heaven. Unworthy to entreat thy beloved Son, we beg thee to obtain for us the grace to be faithful to Him unto death and after death to be happy with thee and Him in Heaven. Finally we earnestly plead with thee to obtain the blessing of the Blessed Trinity for everyone who attends the May devotions, so that every act of this month may be a prayer of love to thee and thy Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

WE fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God ;
despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver
us from all danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.

God, the Son and Redeemer of the world,
have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of Virgins,

Mother of Christ,

Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,

Mother most chaste,

Mother inviolate,

Mother undefiled,

}
Pray for us.
}

Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Redeemer,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Vessel of singular devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the Covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of Prophets,

Pray for us.

Queen of Apostles,	}	Pray for us.
Queen of Martyrs,		
Queen of Confessors,		
Queen of Virgins,		
Queen of All Saints,		
Queen conceived without original sin,		
Queen of the Most Holy Rosary,		
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.		

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Lord.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the divine Assistance always remain with us and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the Mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

[After reading the Meditation for the day, say the Memorare, etc.]

Let us Pray.

Remember, O most pious and tender hearted Virgin Mary, that no one has had recourse to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy mediation without obtaining relief. Confiding in thy goodness and mercy, I cast myself at thy sacred feet. O Mother of the Eternal Word, adopt me as thy child and take upon thyself the care of my salvation. Let it not be said my dearest Mother that I have perished where no one found but help and salvation. Amen.

The Salve Regina.

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy ; our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve ; to thee do we send up sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate thine eyes of mercy toward us ; and after this our exile is ended, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary !

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

A Prayer for Souls of the Faithful Departed.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of the faithful departed remission of all their sins, that through pious supplications

they obtain that pardon which they have always desired, who livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

First Day.

OPENING EXERCISES.

AT the dawn of this much desired month, the heart of every Catholic wells forth with joyful prayer in veneration to the Queen of May. Children piously gather flowers for the Altar and love to cluster thereat. Every devout heart is saying Hail Marys of thanksgiving and supplication; and you, my christian friends, come to kneel at her shrine to offer the gifts of your soul and the toil of your hands to her and her divine Son.

During your visits in this beautiful month, I know of no meditations more profitable than those suggested by the sacred mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Let us, then, each evening dwell upon some topic of devotion, radiating from the rosary as perfume emanates from flowers. You can not be more profitably or piously engaged than in meditating upon these piety-breathing mysteries. They recall to your minds the chief acts in the Redemption of mankind; they tell you of the suffering and mercy of Jesus and the glory and sorrows of His blessed Mother. This very instructive devotion is especially adapted to the month of May. A month dedicated by the Church to the veneration of the Mother of God, should be at once fraught with love for Jesus and for Mary: but

what devotion in the Church promotes more the love of Jesus and Mary, what more inspiring, what more conducive to the fostering of that love than that which begins with the Annunciation, considers the principal features in the life of Christ, and concludes with the crowning of the Mother of Sorrows in the kingdom of her divine Son.

Again, May is happily christened Mary's month ; —a month full of joy, a month which gives birth to the flowers which decorate the landscapes and ornament her altars in every Christian land. Still, while you beautify her altar with flowers, you should weave, in your hearts, for Mary garlands of prayer. The rosary is a wreath of purest devotion. Every Hail Mary is a rose entwined about a sacred mystery ; and every rose in the garland exhales the noblest emotions of the soul in adoration to Jesus and in veneration to Mary.

Behold in May the Catholic heart breathing forth love to Mary ! Behold Catholics in every hamlet, town and city, assembling around her altars and offering to her the most beautiful roses of prayer ! The memories of Easter still linger in the soul and inspire affection for her whose gentle heart was pierced with a sword of grief. Her love and compassion for the human race draw you irresistibly toward her and the nearer you are to her, the closer and dearer you are to Jesus. How happy it is to see you here around her altar ! At her feet you place the flowers of prayer and entreat her to give the choicest to the divine Infant in her arms.

Poets have sung her greatness and exhausted their genius in proclaiming her exalted virtues. Sculptors have exerted their skill in perpetuating her memory and transmitting in marble to posterity the magnificent offerings of their great souls. Painters have made themselves famous and in the meantime enriched the world by their marvelous productions of the subjects embraced in the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Architecture has erected shrines the most beautiful and temples the most graceful to her honor. Eloquence and poetry, the chisel and the brush, have breathed forth the prayer of genius into enduring monuments to her meekness, humility, sanctity, and love. On this first evening in May, you kneel about her altar ; you unite your prayers with her illustrious friends of the past, and with the angels and saints in heaven ; you present to her the happy, buoyant emotions awakened in your souls by this beautiful spring-time and inspired by this delightful month ; you entreat her to watch over your lives and to offer to God the purest prayer of your hearts. The moments thus spent at Mary's altar are the happiest of your lives.

Deduction : Do something during this month to promote the veneration of the Mother of God. Exert yourselves to enlist others into her service, that together you may fashion a crown from the rosary to adorn her pure brow.

Let us say three Hail Marys that God may give us the power to increase veneration for the Queen of Angels.

Second Day.

FIRST MYSTERY—*The Annunciation.*

THIS mystery, the first in the crown of our Blessed Mother, brought joy to the human race. The angel Gabriel, the honored ambassador of heaven, departs from the throne of Eternal Justice, bearing a message from the King of kings to an innocent, humble virgin; “and the name of the virgin was Mary.” How does this heavenly envoy address this meek pure virgin? Pause and reflect at the exalted tone and profound meaning of this message dictated by Almighty God himself to the great Archangel. It was not composed even by the brilliant intellect of the angel, but emanated from the God of all wisdom. The angel introduces his embassy by this marvelous salutation: “Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee.” Afterwards he declares to her: “Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus.” O Virgin pure and mild! How wonderfully have the words of sacred scripture been verified in you—truly the Lord has exalted the humble! With what love and humility we should say with the angel: “Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee!”

Mary was astounded at the salutation of the angel

and said in her heart: "What manner of salutation this should be." Ah, we may say in our hearts what a message is this! What an announcement to the virgin meek and ever immaculate! What an annunciation to the whole human race! Reflect upon it, my Christian friends. Reflect upon this sacred mystery as it pertains to Mary and to God. Reflect upon it in all its consequences to the human race. In such reflection you will behold the mercy of God and the inexpressible exaltation of the Mother of Jesus. At that moment a new epoch in the history of mankind was begun. The great Archangel was as the morning star of Christianity, announcing the coming of a new day, declaring the mercy of God, the glorious privilege of Mary, and the unspeakable condescension of her divine Son.

This spotless virgin whose innocence "enamored heaven whose like has never been nor e'er shall be," was chosen as the sacred means to convey to the world the King of kings and the Lord of lords. She is the mother of the Redeemer and the friend of sinners. He died for sinners; she bears a martyr's crown for them. His love for the human race can be best studied in the debasement into which He permitted Himself to sink and in the sufferings which He endured. Her love for mankind is clearly visible in her tears and agony upon that memorable, first Good Friday. The love of both for poor, weak man, no Christian should deny. It was this love which commanded the homage of the great Archangel

Gabriel ; it was this love which induced the Son of God to become a child of Mary ; and it was this love together with her confidence in her Creator, which formed Mary's reply to the angel : "Be it done to me according to thy word."

Eve had yielded to the desolating voice of the tempter and, with Adam, had communicated the sad effects of her fall to the human race. The earth was cursed in their rebellion and mankind was doomed to mystery and death. To restore man to the friendship of his Creator, to give him the means to attain to great glory, to enable a Virgin to crush the serpent's head, the Eternal Father published His will to the hosts of heaven and appointed the great Archangel to bear the message to the immaculate Virgin Mary. How different is His address to the future mother of His only begotten Son from that spoken to Eve, the mother by nature of the human race. To the latter He speaks in sorrow and censure ; to the former with joy and approbation. In one case He rebukes sinners, in the other He exalts innocence.

You may, my brethren, learn by this contrast the enormity of sin and the beauty of innocence. The parching effects of sin follow from the transgression of our first parents: redemption, grace, and heaven bless the obedience of Mary. Should not this contrast induce you to avoid and hate that which displease God and devastates your own souls ? Should it not awaken an ardent desire and stimulate effort to please God, thereby enriching, elevating, and ennobling

yourselves. By sin you are separated from God ; by sin you corrupt your souls ; by sin you banish from your hearts the angels of God, and condemn yourselves to wretchedness and hell. By obedience to God's law you are blessed with the friendship of your eternal Father, your hearts are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and your souls the receptacles of His grace.

Deduction: Unite with the angels in proclaiming Mary's incomparable virtues. By your acts of devotion manifest your love for her. Take her as your model. By imitating her love for Jesus, you will become His devout children.

Let us say three Hail Marys that we may ever imitate the virtues of the Blessed Virgin.

Third Day.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ANNUNCIATION CONTINUED.

WHEN the Blessed virgin replied to the Angel ; "Be it done unto me according to thy word," the inhabitants of limbo rejoiced. They learned that the time of their deliverance was near. The virtuous souls therein confined had yearned during centuries for the coming of Christ ; now they hear with joy that the period of Redemption is nigh. The patriarchs and prophets, in fact all the just dead, longed for the coming of the Redeemer. He is now about to appear and their bondage will end. Happy they must have been as Mary's answer to the envoy of heaven reverberated throughout limbo.

The Annunciation and its acceptance by Mary had and still have far more reaching effects. Her influence and the conquering, subduing power of her divine Son have broken the bondage of many a slave of tyranny and sin. No more does the captive add glory to the triumphal march of the conqueror ; no more is he doomed to a life of slavery or the brutality of the victor. War is not deprived of all its atrocity, still many of its cruel consequences have yielded to the benign sway of Jesus and Mary. The captive is not now a slave, the serf is a relic of other ages, and

the slave is no longer sold in the mart to the highest bidder.

The Annunciation has not only abolished traffic in human lives, but it has elevated mankind socially, morally, and religiously. The Child of Mary is kinder, more gentle to the unfortunate than the pagans ever were. They had a civilization and many of them were renowned in letters ; but their civilization and culture knew not God, and neither were they restrained nor enriched by the ameliorating influence of Christianity. Morality and religion have advanced with the advancement of devotion to the Blessed Virgin. It is unnecessary to say to you that in all the ages of the Church Jesus, the Son of God, is the one, great Central Being of devotion and adoration. Still the meekness, gentleness, humility, and suffering of Mary have enlisted people's attention ; and while they ponder upon her goodness, they were induced by her influence to kneel at the feet of her divine Son and accept the principles He taught. Her virtues were missionaries among the barbarians who overran and devastated Europe. Having glutted their desire for conquest, they paused for relaxation ; and during the cessation of hostilities, they were subdued by the mother of Jesus. They became Catholics. Many of them became Mary's devout children. Some of them gave, in convents and monasteries, their lives to her service. Others stood at the altar of God and offered to the eternal Father the Sacrifice of Cavalry for the living and the dead.

Her influence can not be overestimated. You see it now upon the child who loves her ; you feel it in your own hearts ; and the history of the Church relates her triumphs in every age. The social, moral, and religious efficiency of the Annunciation went forth to convert the sinner, to civilize the savage and stabilize society ; and none can truthfully deny that Mary was the greatest human agent whence emanated the perfections, the principles, and the victories of Christianity. With your own eyes you have seen her beneficent effects upon this congregation, you have seen the progress of the rosary society, and the devotion of the children of Mary ; and from this progress and devotion you have observed an increased attendance at divine service, greater love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, and a general improvement in the piety and charity of this parish.

The effects of her benevolent power are seen in the orphan asylums, hospitals, convents, monasteries, which bless every Christian land ; and in the erection and maintenance of Churches in every hamlet, town, and city, where God is adored and Mary venerated. The efficacy of the Annunciation is acknowledged and praised wherever a Catholic priest celebrates the adorable Sacrifice of Calvary, wherever a nun prays, or a Catholic offers homage to God. You, my Christian friends, join your praise with the praises of every land. During this month dedicated to the veneration of Mary, you should attend the devotions held in this Church to her honor, that you may be children of

Mary and be worthy of her prayers. Your visits to this Church will encourage others to come to venerate Mary and adore God. Your devotion will draw you nearer to God, make you earnest and practical in the exercise of your religion, and enrich your souls with the blessings of heaven.

Deduction: Thank God for His mercies to the human race in His beneficent Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary ; and beg of Him that you may always be chaste receptacles of His favors, and the fruits of Mary's prayers.

Let us say three Hail Marys in thanksgiving to God for the Annunciation to the Mother of Jesus.

Fourth Day.

THE SECOND MYSTERY—*The Visitation.*

ST. LUKE says : “ Mary arose in those days and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachariah and saluted Elizabeth.” This visit of the Queen of Heaven to her cousin must have a divine purpose and be of vast importance to the human race ; for Almighty God directs His inspired writer to make a record of it for future generations. Earthly queens have made visits. Their retinue gleamed with royal livery. On their routes they were received with magnificent honors ; and the cities which welcomed them, were ablaze with glory. But had they such a historian to record the splendor of their equipage, or the triumph of their entrance ? No ; and the memory of their pomp has vanished from the hearts of mankind. But Mary’s visit to her cousin is of such great interest to God and man, that the Creator of all things wills that its memory will not fade from the souls of men. When you consider that God is the Creator of visible and invisible worlds, that He is the Author of the magnificence of heaven, that he created the angels who surround his throne, that he has full knowledge of the greatest achievements of

man, I say when you consider all these things you will conclude that this visit of the Blessed Virgin to St. Elizabeth was no insignificant trifle, when God Himself commanded that a record of it should be kept. This visit, then, is of vast and profound importance, whether we can grasp its deep meaning or not. Note, too, that the Church ever guided by the Spirit of God, has declared this visit to be the second mystery of the rosary. Thus you behold that Almighty God decreed that the recollection of Mary's visit must not disappear from the annals of Christianity and the Church perpetuates in this beautiful prayer what the inspired writer recorded.

The distance from the Blessed Virgin's home to where St. Elizabeth resided is estimated at eighty miles. A long journey for those times when there was little convenience for traveling. Since she was poor, it is likely she made the visit on foot. But what rapture filled her pure heart on this journey! And what affection and humility she manifested! Angels attended her, for she carried with her their Lord and their God. If a divinely appointed star was a guide and a solace to the wise men who visited her divine Infant in the Crib at Bethelhem; if angels conducted the shepherds to adore the same Infant, what heavenly guides must have accompanied her on this long journey. Physically she must have been tired, but her soul was in ecstasy. Her unseen retinue was the angels of heaven. They must have rejoiced when delegated to perform such noble service.

Her cousin saluted her with these wonderful words contained in the Hail Mary: "Blessed art thou among women." St. Elizabeth was influenced by an inspiration from God, and no doubt was impressed by the presence of the invisible companions of the mother of God. Pause and consider Mary's humility in making this visit. Earthly queens do not thus humiliate themselves; but Mary, the Queen of Angels, rejoices that she can so honor her cousin. Reflect too on the countless visits which the mother of Jesus has made since that remarkable time. Unseen she has visited the martyrs in their gloomy dungeons, monks in their cells of poverty, nuns in their cloisters, saints and scholars in their seclusion. Yea, she has visited sinners of every grade;—entreating, begging them to return to her divine Son, whispering to their souls the love and pity of Jesus for them, picturing to them the heinousness of sin, and the awful consequences thereof.

Deduction: Visit often in prayer the Blessed Virgin, and when an opportunity offers itself, visit her altar. She frequently visits you, and what was your joy on the morning of your first Holy Communion, when you were pure and good and her divine Son visited you! Be mindful of her affections for you. When you can, visit the sick and the needy. If you are able, help them from your purse. Speak kindly to them, and speak as Mary would speak, not with affectation or conceit, but from sincere motives, with humility and compassion. Then you will be true children of Jesus and Mary.

Let us say three Hail Marys in honor of the humility of Mary and ask her to teach us this beautiful virtue.

Fifth Day.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VISITATION CONTINUED.

THE Blessed Virgin's visit to her cousin shows us the friendship she had for her relatives and teaches you the esteem you should have for your friends. When they are in want or trouble, you should visit them and assist them according to your means. In this way you imitate Mary. Her acts are worthy of imitation, for such imitation raises you to the plane of great virtue. The more you imitate her, the more perfect you become, and the nearer you are to the sacred Heart of Jesus. In following her example your hearts will be calmed by that tranquillity which springs from doing good. Your prayers will be more devout; the trials of life will be borne with greater fortitude, and you will be the better and the happier by following the foot-prints of Mary's charity.

You ought also visit the sick. Jesus himself teaches you this great work of christian virtue. He was always kind to the infirm, giving them health of body and soul. If Mary's life were fully known, how many grand proofs you would have of her kindness to the sick. What joy she imparted by her visits! Patience took the place of discontent, feebleness was animated by hope, and resignation to God's will lightened the burden of sickness. Oh, if you be true to the example

given you by the weak, gentle, charitable mother of God, you will be blessed with peace and contentment. She will be your unfaltering, constant friend. Her influence with God none can estimate, though from her position you may catch some gleam of the efficacy of her prayers. St. Peter Chrysologus eloquently speaks of her power in these words: "One Virgin so receives and contains God in the lodging of her breast as to procure peace for the earth, glory for heaven, salvation for the lost, life for the dead, an alliance of those on earth with the blessed in heaven."

Remember too that God is the Father of the sick and the unfortunate as well as of the healthy and the prosperous. He may love the weak more than the strong. Indeed, sickness is at times inflicted by Him upon those whom He loves. He wishes to protect them and He employs sickness, disappointment, and other ills to restrain them from wickedness and hell. Though the sick and the poor are neglected by many, they are the constant care of Jesus and Mary. The Blessed Virgin is the "Health of the Weak." She tells you that unless you be kind to the needy, you are not her children. She never forgets them and you will exalt yourselves and enrich your souls with God's grace, if you imitate her. She differs from many in the world in her care for the afflicted; and she wishes you to do likewise. On earth many have no time for the sick and poor. If the sick person be rich or influential, then attention is lavished upon him or her. The callers at his bedside or her

bedside add to their own importance by visits to these sick. They ascend in the social scale or they impress others with their social elevation, by the privilege they have in making such visits. There may be money in this affectation. If the sick person is wealthy, it may pay to be kind ; and oh, how easy it is for some to be gracious, when flattery may be rewarded by thousands in cash, and expectancy satiated with an abundance of the dying person's treasures. But the poor, alas the poor ! may waste away in sickness, and no one thinks it is an honor to visit them. They have nothing to give, they can impart no desirable, social distinction, and they may suffer and die.

Yea, they have something to give. They give from hearts overflowing with gratitude their prayers, and these prayers are jewels far richer and more joy-giving than the wealth which opulence imparts or flattery obtains. There are the purest friendship and charity in these visits. The visitor expects nothing, for apparently there is not anything to give. There are gentleness and sincerity and friendship in such calls. The sick know that these angels of solace and help are friends ; for there is nothing else but friendship and charity to induce them to come. Yes, there is more, though such charitable person may not at the time consider it. There are the prayers of the Blessed Virgin and the blessings of her divine Son. These are superior to what the earth can bestow. They will have value and reward when avarice is

tormented by its own greed ; and flattery skulks away from the searching eye of Providence. Visit, therefore, the bedside of the sick, and relieve the homes of poverty. Do not those things for praise or reward, except that praise and reward which emanate from the pure hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Deduction: Study the lives of Jesus and Mary and strive to render yours conformable to theirs. Such study and the use of this study in the conduct of life will make you happier on earth and happier at death, than privilege and wealth, rapacity and cunningness, ever can.

Let us say three Hail Marys that Mary's prayers may increase in our hearts the virtue of charity.

Sixth Day.

THE THIRD MYSTERY.

The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALL is quiet in Bethelhem. No one expects the least change in the religious world. Though the Jewish people looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer, none imagined that the blessed day was at hand. Silence reigned in the ancient town. There was no heavenly herald announcing that the New King was to appear on earth that very night ; nor did any prophet receive a message from heaven on the eve of that memorable day, telling him to exhort the people and to make preparations for the Lord of heaven and earth. No ; a calm settled over Bethelhem. The world was in peace. There was no clashing of military arms ; blood was not oozing from the mortal wounds of deadly contestants ; the groans of the dying on the battlefield did not rend the air. All was tranquil and rightly too ; for the King of Peace, garbed in human nature, was soon to visit the earth. The Blessed, immaculate Virgin could find no lodging place in the town. No shelter for her who is now Queen of the Angels ; no shelter for her devout spouse, St Joseph ; no shelter for the divine Babe to be born that night. Nay ; no shelter but a stable ; no cradle, but a manger ; no comfort, but

straw and the heat from the animals stabled in that humble place.

The earth was disinterested in the events of that solemn night; but heaven was in ecstasy. The Angels of God bowed their crowned heads in adoration to the Infant born in the stable. The Eternal Father was pleased at the birth and condescension of His only begotten Son. Heavenly messengers appeared to the much favored shepherds who were attending their flocks. Ah, those must have been pious men upon whom so great a blessing was bestowed. After Mary and Joseph they were the first to behold and adore the New Born King. Mortal eyes never before gazed upon so glorious a scene. A stable was the first temple in which Jesus received the homage of man. What a congregation! Joseph and Mary and the shepherds! How pure and undefiled must their souls have been! In magnificent cathedrals on which love for God lavished wealth and munificence, millions during all the centuries have knelt before this same Infant and adored Him in our modern crib—the tabernacle; but what a contrast in the worshipers, and what a contrast between the temples where Mary and Joseph and the shepherds worshiped, and the grand, imposing edifices in which multitudes now assemble to adore God. Innocent hearts have bowed before Him in prayer during all those years of Christianity; but none were comparable to the little groupe which offered its homage on that Christmas night. How Mary's heart swelled in

thanksgiving and joy ! She forgot the destitution and repulsiveness of the stable. This became a hallowed spot, a sacred place to her. In this humble abode her divine Son appeared on earth ; and His presence expelled the thoughts or conditions of poverty, and filled her exalted soul with joy and gratitude !

A stable the first church of christendom ; a manger the first tabernacle to contain Jesus, the Son of God ; Mary, his mother, the immaculate custodian of that tabernacle ! How she held Him up in her pure hands as the shepherds bowed in adoration just as the priest holds Him up now at the elevation of the mass while the faithful kneel in worship. The shepherds adored Him in the hands of His mother ; catholics now adore Him in the hands of the priest. Surely that was a sacred place where Jesus was born. Though a stable, the temple of Jerusalem was as nothing compared with the sacredness of that hallowed spot. Jesus converted by His presence the dingy, cold, cheerless place into a historic spot of sacred interest to the human race. Did this stable now exist, thousands of pious pilgrims would visit that sacred relic of Christ's birth. Christian love and Christian prayer would center in that humble abode of God's mercy and condescension. As the pilgrim knelt to adore God, his soul would enkindle with fervent devotion and sacred memories. Ah, well he might adore : for angels adored that Christmas night ; the shepherds, devout representatives of the human race,

adored; St. Joseph adored, and the purest of all, the mother, adored.

Jesus, my Christian friends, dissipated the gloom and the repulsiveness of the stable. His divine Person filled the place with mysterious peace and heavenly attraction. Angels dwelled there that Christmas night; but since that memorable, sacred night, from how many a human heart has not Jesus banished gloom and despondency. Many and many a heart has rejoiced at His coming; and many and many a heart has been blessed more than Bethalem. His presence has converted the cold, gloomy, cheerless heart into a joyful abode of peace where angels love to linger. His power and presence made the despondent heart bright; converted the callous sinful heart; imparted tranquillity and joy, benediction and grace.

Deduction: Kneel before the tabernacle this evening and adore the Infant Jesus. Imitate the shepherds. Angels have also conducted you hither, and while adoring Jesus, breathe a prayer of love to His mother. Entreat her so to guide you that you may ever be her child and in the simplicity of such childhood, may you always be devout worshipers of her divine Son.

Let us say three Hail Marys that the Eternal Father may always give us purest devotion to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Seventh Day.

THE MYSTERY OF THE NATIVITY CONTINUED.

AH, how profound is the wisdom of Almighty God! And who can comprehend His ways? What sage would devise Bethelhem as the birth place of the Son of the Most High? Who would have considered a stable the most fitting abode for His entry into this world? None could have been so wise; none so foreseeing. Yet, this poor condition was best adapted to the glorious end He had in view. He came not to repel with brilliancy, but to attract with humility and love.

Mark the beautiful words of the angel to the shepherds: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all the people; for this day is born to you in the City of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord." What a simple, majestic announcement. No human tongue could have expressed it thus. An angel, the herald; shepherds, the first recipients of such joyful tidings. "Fear not," said the angel. Fear not, we add; fear not the angels your friends; fear not the New Born King Who did not come to awe you with splendor or terrify you with threats. He has threatened, it is true; and it is likewise true that He punishes; still His birth and

suffering are the manifestations of His insatiable love. If He must punish, the fault is ours ; and His punishment diminishes not His love. Poverty, humility, and love ! How perfectly you are visible in the Babe of the City of David ! What refuge could present more poverty ? What birth, more humility ! What sacrifice, more love !

If the angels filled the air with the melody of their joyful anthems, what rapture must have seized the heart of the Blessed Virgin ! The angels rejoiced at the Savior's coming in the habit of human nature ; but Mary was His mother. Well has she said : " My soul doth magnify the Lord." Ah, her pure soul did little else but speak to Him and pray to Him and fondle Him with all its love. How irresistible both of them draw us by their love ! This evening their love has urged you to kneel before her altar and supplicate her intercession ; and this evening, kneeling you adore her divine Son in our modern manger the tabernacle. Yea ; and you have love for them both. You love them and you love them most on account of the lowliness which they assumed for you. You twine a garland of Hail Mary's for her brow ; but you offer to Jesus the first fruits of your soul.

On that sacred Christmas night, there were only a few to venerate Mary ; only a few to adore her divine Son. Since the adoration of the shepherds, who can estimate the millions that have loved Jesus and Mary ? How many a Hail Mary has been on the lips of saints and sinners ! In hunger and poverty, on

lonely mountains and in desert places, on tempestuous seas and in troubled hearts, many a prayer was said to the mother of Jesus. Who can enumerate the sighs of those agitated hearts, which pleaded to Mary for divine assistance? Woe and sorrow and love conducted countless multitudes to her shrines; and how much better the world has been for her influence. Her gentle persuasiveness has kindly led numberless souls to the throne of God. She hates sin, still loves the sinner. She hates sin, because it is a ghastly deformity in human nature; and because this deformity is repugnant to her Lord and her God. Consequently she entreats the sinner to banish sin from his soul, pictures to him the heinousness of sin, points to the manger and the cross as proofs of Christ's pardon and love. In England Protestants are now understanding her influence and are introducing veneration to her. Long ago they departed from her or wished to depart from her. They see their gross mistake, and acknowledge that her power over the human hearts is mighty and indispensable. They exiled the mother of Jesus from their religion, thinking they could thus better estrange themselves from everything Catholic. Experience has taught them the contrary; and now the mother of Jesus may lead them back into the church of her divine Son.

My Christian friends, be ever mindful of the affection you owe to Mary. Love her for her own sake and the sake of the Son of God. If others think her influence useful, you should consider its benignity,

tenderness, and grace-obtaining power. Often pray to her; and when you have an opportunity, kneel before her altar and ask her to remember you to her divine Son.

Deduction : Imitate the shepherds and the Queen of Angels by adoring Jesus in the tabernacle. It is another manger. Bow down before Him and adore Him, your Lord and God. Be as the shepherds. Listen and obey the angels calling upon you to adore your God. If you comply, Jesus and Mary will not be heedless when you call upon them for help. At the hour of death, if not before, your devotedness will be rewarded by Almighty God.

Let us say three Hail Marys, asking God for the grace to be faithful children of Jesus and Mary.

Eighth Day.

THE FOURTH MYSTERY.

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

WE learn, from this mystery, more about the submissiveness and humility of our Blessed Mother. Forty days after the birth of her divine Son, she walks several miles to Jerusalem and offers Him in the temple. The presentation of the Infant Jesus in the temple took place upon the day which we call Candlemas or the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. This ceremony of the Purification was a custom established by the law of God and observed by the Jews during a great number of centuries. On such an occasion a lamb was offered to Almighty God as an acknowledgment of His sovereignty and a turtle-dove as a sin-offering. Poor people were exempted from giving a lamb in sacrifice and instead gave a turtle-dove. The Holy Family was poor and consequently the Queen of Angels, the Mother of God, in her temporal poverty could not give more than two doves,—one as a sacrifice to God, the other as an offering for sin.

Mark well the submission and humility of Mary. She who was never tainted by sin, the pure, the immaculate, complies with the law of Moses and makes

no remonstrance against such indignities. Classed among sinners, she bears in her arms the Son of God and in her soul the inextinguishable lamp of divine grace. From the first moment of her existence she was as pure as the purest angel in heaven ; and the variety and abundance of her grace was greater than all the angels of God. They gaze upon the human form of the Son of God ; she was the receptacle and mother of that glorious human form. What perfect models of meekness are Jesus and Mary ! Asserting not their authority, proclaiming not their perfections, they were classified among the fallen children of Adam. They were not seeking for flattery, they did not desire the regal pomp with which kings and queens emblazon the baptism of their children. A turtle-dove for a burnt offering, a turtle-dove in atonement for sin, were the simple tokens of Mary's purification. A superfluous ceremony in this case, because the Mother of Jesus was spotless, her pure soul was never under the dominion of hell.

Meditating upon this mystery, you recall another requirement of the law of Moses. When a child was presented in the temple, the parents could ransom their child by paying a certain sum of money. It appears this sum was five shekels or about three dollars and fifty cents of United States money. The Blessed Virgin paid the five shekels ; thus redeeming, according to the law, her divine Child. Wonderful, indeed, is the humility of the Son of God ! What extraordi-

nary obedience to a law over which He was sovereign ! Marvelous you may deem it, that some resplendent Archangel did not appear to remonstrate against such indignity and reveal the divinity of the God-child. But no ; this was not the will of the Eternal Father. His ways are beyond our weak comprehension. The divine plan had to be executed in every particular ; and upon reflection how wise and broad and deep was His plan, we must admit.

This humiliation of the Infant Jesus, all concede not to be obligatory ; because He was superior to the law, the Legislator of that law, the Lord and Creator of that law. St. Hilary observes on this point : “ The king’s son to whom the inheritance of the Crown belongs, is exempt from servitude ; much more Christ Who was the Redeemer of both souls and bodies, was not subject to any law by which Himself was to be redeemed.” But Jesus wished to teach us and did teach us by every act of His life on earth. On this remarkable occasion He teaches us humility, obedience, and devotion :—Humility by submitting to the law, obedience to the will of His Eternal Father, and devotion to the eternal plan of Redemption, in which He concurred before He departed from the mansions of heaven to walk, in human guise, through sufferings and blood. With what self-debasement, cheerfulness, and charity did He offer Himself to torments, agony, and death !

Deduction: Pause to meditate upon the submission and obedience of your Savior. Learn of Him the re-

spect and devotion you owe to the law of God and to the law of man when it does not contravene the mandates of heaven. Behold His obedience and learn to be obedient, patient, and humble ; Mary presented him in the temple ; ask her to present you to her divine Son. She carried Him a long distance to Jerusalem ; beg of her to carry you to heaven.

Let us say three Hail Marys, imploring the aid of the Blessed Virgin on our way to virtue and to heaven.

Ninth Day.

THE FOURTH MYSTERY.

The Presentation of the Child Jesus Continued.

WHEN the Blessed Virgin presented her divine Infant in the temple, she met a venerable, pious man by the name of Simeon. He had long prayed to see, before his departure from this life, the Messiah, the Savior of the human race. His ardent, incessant prayer was heard in heaven ; and it was his great joy to hold the divine Child in his arms. Amidst the throng which came and went to the temple on that day, only two persons were inspired to recognize the divinity of the Babe in Mary's arms. Holy Simeon and devout Ann were enraptured by their proximity to the Son of God. Their souls were animated by heavenly inspiration. No doubt, angels inspired in their hearts the glorious splendor which the human form of the divine Infant concealed. Their hearts beat fast under the divine influence and their souls were burning with ecstasy at sight of the New Born King. Noah was the only one to whom God communicated His design of destroying by water every living thing on the face of the earth and His intention of saving Noah and his family. In the temple there were only two individuals to whom God reveal Him-

self. But what a revelation ! His intention is not now to destroy but to redeem ! Not to overwhelm in ruin on account of sin, but to ransom from destruction by His love and His sacred blood ! Ah, but why did He reveal Himself to Simeon and Ann ? Because they were devout, faithful observers of the laws of God. They fasted and prayed ; and their fasting and praying were in this wonderful manner rewarded by the Redeemer of mankind. Another lesson to us ; for, if we desire to know Jesus and sometime to be happy with Him, we must reach Him by means of mortification. Such inestimable rewards are not easily won. A cross is necessary to acquire the crown ; yet the crown is well worth the pain, the disappointment, the agony of the cross. Through thorns the way leads to heaven when you will be blessed with richer blessings than those conferred upon holy Simeon and devout Ann.

This saintly man, however, predicted that a sword of grief would pierce the heart of Mary. I wonder whether this is the way Almighty God has to make manifest the tenderness, delicacy, and nobility of the heart. It appears natural enough, that the heart pierced by the shafts of woe, will bleed and still by the wounds thus cruelly inflicted, become rich in sympathy, refined in pathos, and nobler on account of the blow which apparently was dealt to prostrate its energies. From the wounds flow pity for others and help and solace. What would this heartless world be but for the kindly currents which emanate

from wounded hearts ! Yea ; but whose heart was ever lacerated by the wounds of grief, as Mary's was ? No human mortal ever suffered so much or so keenly. No heart, except the Sacred Heart of her divine Son, was so delicately constituted and consequently so sensitive to pain. Her heart was riven by grief. The aching throbs of her gentle heart are beyond computation. Since no other heart is so delicate, no other heart can indure the martyrdom of her heart ; since no other heart was so pain stricken as her heart, no other heart can sufficiently compassionate the intense agony of her grief. It bled in pity for her Son ; still from the wounds so deep and painful come kindness and love and friendship for the human race. Her compassion for the sinner springs from two great sources : first the awful ransom paid by her divine Son ; and secondly the inestimable value of a human soul, as judged by the immensity of the ransom. No wonder she pleads with sinners. No wonder she prizes a human soul. After Jesus no one knows better the price it cost ; yet this price makes us dearer to her and her more endeared to us. Out of her wounded heart comes tenderness for the afflicted, she knows what it is to suffer ; solace for the desponding, for she knows the great value of a kind, gentle, re-animating whisper ; friendship for the lonely, for she knows what it is to be without a friend ! Wonder indeed it would be, if Catholics loved her not ; if they did not appreciate her love, admire her fidelity, and honor her great, kind heart !

Deduction : We should often reflect upon the graciousness and beneficence of our Blessed Mother ; and give to the poor in her name. In this manner we could express by our act, what the tongue can not speak or the heart voice even in its own language. By such charity we echo the pure sentiment of our heart's love for the Mother of Jesus.

Let us say three Hail Marys for an increase of love for Jesus and Mary.

Tenth Day.

THE FIFTH MYSTERY.

The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.

THIS mystery gives you another convincing proof of the devotion and piety of the Blessed Virgin. Herself and her kinsfolks went to Jerusalem to observe the feast. Good, pious people they were. What an influential example they gave by their observance of the feast. Many Catholics are just as faithful, just as pious. They visit with ardent, grateful hearts to participate in the beautiful, stupendous feast of the Holy Eucharist. As they hurry along the highways and streets leading to their churches, what an exalting, beneficent example they impart. They teach and teach efficiently by the conduct manifested upon such occasions. Like some beautiful, but irresistible stream which sweeps with the current the debris met in its course, these Catholics by their persuasive example bear into the harbor of their church many delinquent Catholics. Good, devout, practical Catholics lead many to justice ; lead many into the temple of God where Jesus teaches as eloquently and as persuasively as he did when His mother found Him among the Doctors in the temple. Now He teaches in divers ways, but especially by

His love in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar. Catholics kneel to adore while angels and their Queen offer homage to the Son of God placed in the Crib of the tabernacle by the loving hands of His priest. If the Jews exposed themselves to the privations of long journeys in order to attend the feasts held in the temple, how much more fervent and self-sacrificing should Catholics be in their attendance at that adorable feast when Jesus is offered to His Eternal Father for the salvation of the living and the dead! How they should pour forth the kindest, loveliest sentiments of their hearts to Him Who humiliates Himself by remaining among us in the wonderful sacrament of His love!

In reference to this mystery the sacred Scripture tells you that Jesus stood at the age of twelve years in the midst of the doctors of the Jewish law, asking them questions and skillfully replying to their interrogations. They marveled at the wisdom in a child so young. At this early age He began to teach and one of the great lessons which He taught on that occasion, is obedience. Complying with the wish of His mother He leaves the temple and goes with her. He obeys His beloved mother, thus teaching children to obey their parents, while He intimates that any request which His mother may make of Him, He will cheerfully perform. Since He left the temple to follow her, will He now refuse her those petitions which she presents to Him in behalf of sinners? The moans and the sighs of breaking hearts, she bears to

Him ; and asks relief for affliction, hope for despondency, courage for disappointment, solace for pain, and grace for the penitent. If other saints can obtain favors for you from God, what must be the influence of the Queen of Heaven in securing blessings for her clients ! She is vastly above them, immensely more influential. Indeed many doctors of the Church hold that she obtains for the saints the favors they ask, that she is the dispenser of the mercies and blessings of her divine Son. It is not irrational to believe that He has delegated her to accomplish this kindness of sinners. St. Lignori remarks : "The rich of that great people of God are the saints who, when they wish to obtain a favor for one of their clients, all recommend themselves to Mary, that she may obtain it for them." It is profitable and praiseworthy to show honor to the saints and to supplicate their assistance ; but you should not forget in your devotion and love the beneficence and glorious characteristics of Mary. Your devotedness and affection for Mary should be deeper and more comprehensive than for all the other saints. Next to God she is the greatest, noblest, purest, most powerful inhabitant of heaven. Her intercession is more efficacious than the combined efforts of all the saints. Anseim, a saint and a venerable, religious man exclaims : "O Lady ! what the prayers of all the saints can obtain in union with thine, thou canst obtain by thy intercession without their aid." This great and learned saint asks : "But wherefore hast thou such

power?" He replies thus to his own question: "Because thou alone art the mother of our common Savior, thou art the spouse of God, the universal queen of heaven and earth." Then let not new forms of devotion abrogate in your hearts the claims which Mary has to your fidelity and love; nor let them diminish the aspirations and affection with which every true heart should vibrate for her. For my own part I want nothing which Mary can not obtain for me. Everything else would be useless, probably destructive to me.

Deduction: Listen to the teachings of Jesus to your hearts as He whispers from the tabernacle to your souls. These are holy and meritorious moments when He holds converse with you. Be grateful to Him for the profound humility He undergoes for you; and never neglect His Holy Mother. He obeyed her wishes, you obey hers also; and Jesus and Mary will be your friends.

Let us say three Hail Marys that Jesus may teach us to hate sin and love divine grace.

Eleventh Day.

THE FIFTH MYSTERY.

The Finding of the Child Jesus Continued.

THE Blessed Virgin, upon finding her Child in the temple, exclaimed: "Behold, Thy father and I were seeking Thee, sorrowing." Would that more would seek Him, sorrowing! Would that indifferent Catholics—Catholics who relish not to meditate upon the inexhaustible love of Jesus—would seek Him, sorrowing! How miserable they are loaded with the chains of sin, when they could be happy in the grace of their Redeemer! Instead of their going to seek Him, He patiently searches for them. They are the lost sheep; He the Good Shepherd. What love and patience and mercy! It is amazing how some act. Humbly He entreats them to return, supplicates them to find Him in the sacrament of penance. He must plead with them, threaten them, afflict them before their flinty hearts yield, before they go sorrowing to confession. What perversity, what disregard for their own true interests, what rebelliousness, what contempt for the sacred blood which once graciously sprang from His lance-pierced side!

If all Catholics would go often to confession, what a beautiful model of virtue they would give to Protes-

tants. Their lives would be in conformity with the grand purpose for which Jesus died ; and their Christian behavior would draw many sorrowing to Jesus. Though good Catholics are in a state of divine grace, they should frequently seek their Savior in the sacrament of penance, thereby proclaiming the high estimate and intense love they have for the merits of Jesus Christ. In this merciful sacrament the immeasurable love of the Redeemer is felt by the penitent. Grateful should be the hearts of Catholics for such supreme love and mercy. Every act of atonement and reparation within the grasp of their power, they ought cheerfully perform to give some proof of their appreciation.

Sinners certainly acknowledge the efficacy of this sacrament. They who burdened by sin, went to Confession, know the benignity and gentleness of their Savior. They carried a heavy heart into the confessional, they left it rejoicing. Before confession they were fearful ; after confession their hearts were so light, they knew not how to thank God sufficiently. Their love resembled that of a Magdalene or a St. Augustine. They said in their souls : " How happy it is to be good ! " They went sorrowing after Jesus and their sorrow was turned into joy. It may be true that they relapsed into sin ; but who can describe the struggle before they fell ? Repeated sins had weakened their will. Still none but Jesus can estimate the force of the torturing struggle in which they were fiercely engaged. Such souls will never

perish. God loves them too much. They are weak; but their aspirations rise far above their weakness and pierce through the aisles of heaven. They offend; but no sooner have they transgressed than their souls are smitten with remorse; and the wail of their conscience will vibrate in the riven side of their Savior where ultimately they will find shelter and peace.

When seeking for Jesus, it is well to take Mary along with you. She will lead you to Him and be happy in such an engagement. But to have Mary as a guide in so important an enterprise, you must be kind to her, you must cherish her memory, and venerate her exalted virtues; you can easily acquire her aid, if you love her; for as the blessed Albertus Magnus cries out: "Oh, how easy it is for those who love Mary, to find her; and to find her full of love and mercy!" Still you must be dutiful children. You can not expect her guidance, if you appreciate not her worth. It is said that a certain sinner once cried to her: "Show thyself a mother" and she replied: "Show thyself a son." If you be docile, faithful children she will be a mother to you. She will speak to your hearts, awakening a desire for repentance and guaranteeing you mercy in the Sacred Heart of her divine Son. She will be your friend in adversity and she will protect you when you are prone to grow dizzy from success. She will watch at your bed of death; and when the last sigh escapes your parched lips, she will then be your mother and your guide leading you to the bosom of her God and yours.

Deduction : Seek your Savior in the sacrament of penance. His mercy will blot out your sins ; and you will rejoice in His friendship and in the companionship of His Blessed Mother. Have confidence. While He detests sin, He loves sinners. He died for them.

Let us say three Hail Marys, entreating the Blessed Virgin to lead us to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to help us to love Him more and more.

Twelfth Day.

THE SIXTH MYSTERY.

The Agony in the Garden.

ON that memorable Thursday evening our divine Lord enters the Garden of Gethsemane for the Redemption of the human race. Wondering angels look down from their happy homes in heaven and were bewildered at the sight of the magnanimous love of the Son of God. He had instituted the adorable sacrament of the Altar—a covenant between Himself and man, a covenant which would be a perpetual evidence of His affection for the children of Adam. At that Supper whose memory will endure forever, He declared He was sorrowful unto death. His sensitive, beautiful human nature recoiled at the divine tragedy which His divinity foresaw. There was more in that vision than the pain from the wounds inflicted upon His sacred flesh. Ingratitude, abuse, denial by a countless number of Catholics, intensified the pain and augmented His sorrow. “I am sorrowful even unto death.” The extreme of sorrow, sorrow to his last sigh upon the cross, sorrow the end of a sorrowful life!

He leaves the dining hall ; and as He approaches the Garden, His whole passion is before His eyes.

Previously he had loved to go there to pray, now He is sorrowful. It is not the unfolding of a great scene piece by piece ; it is not the endurance of one pain, ignorant of what is to follow ; every particular, every pain is there at once in His Heart. He shudders, as in that scene, He sees Himself crowned with thorns, feels the nails crushing through His sacred hands, experiences the torture caused by the weight of His body hanging upon His wounds, and from out His sorrowful heart comes the cry: " Father, if it is possible let the cup pass ! " But then as if His divinity had imparted new strength or His great love for man was reanimated, He added " Not my will but Thine be done. " His sacred body was soon drenched with the blood which oozed from every pore ; and every drop of that sacred blood proclaimed His love for man. No human tongue can paint that scene. Angels have not that power. Even the Blessed Virgin with all her tenderness and affection is incompetent. It requires the infinite power of Almighty God, for the God-man suffered and a divine Person is necessary to tell what Himself endured in the Garden of Gethsemane. His suffering is beyond the comprehension of created intellect and created hearts can not feel the pain which harrowed every fibre of His sacred body.

Had His Blessed Mother been there, she would have exerted herself to assuage His pains. Her gentleness and devotion to Him would have given perhaps some relief. Her carresses and sweet words

of comfort might have infused some consolation into His sorrowful heart. But, no ; she would suffer soon enough and the longer His agony was withheld from her the better for her sake. The morning would bring the terrible news which would pierce her heart like a poisoned arrow. He would keep the knowledge from her as long as possible.

His three apostles sleep. This is the way with the world. When you must endure some prostrating affliction, you suffer alone. Your friends are sleepy. They are as indifferent to your sorrow, as the moon which shines this evening. There are two, nevertheless, who will watch with you. One will pray for you, the Other will listen to her prayers. If Jesus and Mary are your friends, in adversity you need not feel alone or abandoned. Gaze in wonderment upon the agony in the Garden and be persuaded that the Person Who thus suffered for you, loves you ; and will not forsake you unless you be undeserving of His friendship and His aid. If you banish Him from you and depend upon worldly allies, you may indeed be alone in your trouble and sorrow. The world has no time to squander in sympathy, your friends will soon grow tired of giving solace. It is wise and also just, therefore, to have Jesus and Mary for your friends. In their friendship you can have confidence ; and the deeper the gloom, the darker the night, the keener the sorrow, the nearer they will be to you.

Deduction : When you pass by a Catholic church,

if possible visit the Blessed Sacrament and say a prayer in acknowledgment of the inexplicable agony of Jesus in the Garden. Implore Him to banish all lethargy from your prayers, that you may not be as drowsy in your devotion as the apostles were on that dreadful evening.

Let us say three Hail Marys as an expression of love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Thirteenth Day.

THE SIXTH MYSTERY.

The Agony in the Garden Continued.

WHILE our divine Lord was engaged in prayer in the Garden, Judas was bartering Him for thirty pieces of Silver ; and when He had ended His prayer, Judas appeared with the rabble to seize upon His divine, beneficent Master. There was an agreement between this vile ingrate and the mob. The latter perhaps might mistake some one else for Jesus; but Judas was upon the alert. He would give a sign to them. He would go forward and with the kiss of friendship indicate the victim. "Whom I shall kiss," said Judas, "that is He. Hold Him fast." Your Savior was then bound and dragged from His place of prayer. What degradation ! What self-sacrifice for man ! He permits the heinous intrigues of Judas to be accomplished. Meekly He allows Himself to be shackled. Delivers Himself up for the salvation of the human race. Might not the angels of heaven be amazed at such abnegation ? Wonder indeed it is that the Eternal Father loves man or that His only Begotten Son would ever extend the hand of pity and compassion to depraved human nature after that night.

We must only submit our feelings to His will, while we are astonished at His mercy and His wisdom.

Ah, you may well say that Judas was a villian ; but while you condemn Him and compassionate your Redeemer, you might ponder upon the treachery and treason every day perpetrated upon Him by bad Catholics. Judas betrayed Him ; still since that awe-inspiring night countless thousands have sold Him for some insignificant gain or transitory advantage. Violent passion often conquers ; yet it does not overwhelm the well disposed without a struggle. They sin ; but no sooner have they offended, than their hearts ache with compunction. These are to be pitied ; and it is not to this class we refer, when we speak of treachery or treason to God. To be sure their offences can not be condoned ; still it is frailty, not malice, that is in fault. Some, however, will cater to the religious whims of the multitude or the powerful, that they may attain to some lucrative position or to some station of public honor. In order that they may avoid obstacles temporarily offensive to themselves or their offspring, they do not send their children to Catholic schools. By this management their children learn not of the beauties, the sorrows, or sufferings of their Redeemer. They are deprived of the Christian atmosphere which surrounds the Catholic school. To justify themselves they will even speak harshly of the school in which the crucifix is kept as an instructive symbol of their Savior's love and mercy. They weigh the temporal gain which

they expect to realize, with the school in which Christ's passion is gently and effectively presented to the young heart and they prefer the former. Do they not betray their Savior for a few pieces of silver ? For a little mundane profit ; do they not make light of that knowledge which recounts the duties of a Christian life, which tells of God's all-watching providence, which inspires admiration and gratitude for the Son of God, which teaches that life is short, eternity endless, and that every man will be judged according to his works ? A few others will neglect their religion altogether in order that they may be considered liberal minded and consequently be borne irresistibly upon the waves of popular favor to distinction, wealth and a glorious reputation. They should remember, that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave" and sometimes to hell.

How it must grieve the Blessed Virgin to see her Son so ill treated, to see His great kindness so little regarded, to behold how easily men will barter His sacred memory and infallible teachings for the dazzling colors of a soap-bubble ! With her tender recollections of Calvary, how else can she be but shocked at the stupidity and ingratitude of bad Catholics ! Her divine Son loved the human race. She only of all created creatures knows the extent of that magnanimous love ; and to see that love despised, to hear Him abused, to see Him forgotten, disrespected, insulted and His willing sacrifices ignored, must certainly rend her affectionate heart.

You at least, my Christian friends, console her by your attachment and fidelity to her divine Son ; and, while you say Hail Marys to her honor, beg of her to lay the choicest affections of your hearts at His sacred feet. Have her place there your ambition, your greatest anticipations, your noblest motives, your toil, sacrifices, and entreaties, that He may bless them and that they may ever be expressions of your love and constancy to Him. Should you ever violate His precepts, then turn to Mary and with sorrowing hearts implore her to be still a mother to you and to assist you back to the Sacred, loving Heart of Jesus.

Deduction : You are weak. Without God's assistance you can not perform meritorious works and are prone to fall into grievous sins. Therefore, often supplicate Him for aid and light. Beseech His Blessed mother to remember you in her prayers.

Let us say three Hail Marys that the Mother of Jesus may teach us to pray and keep us near His Sacred Heart.

Fourteenth Day.

THE SEVENTH MYSTERY.

The Scourging at the Pillar.

ON the first Good Friday morning when the news reached the Blessed Virgin that her beloved Son was seized as a criminal, grief strangled her affectionate heart. It is natural to suppose that at first she did not believe the rumor; for her divine Son had violated no law, had infringed upon no one's rights, had not inculcated any sedition. But the awful news was soon confirmed. Some of her friends hurried to her; and as kindly and as gently as possible, told her of the excitement upon the streets. They tried to assuage her grief by assuring her that no serious harm could befall her Son. But what consternation agitated her pure, tender heart! What sorrow benumbed her soul! What tears, what sighs, what prayers were the heralds of the affliction which rent her grief-stricken Soul! Ah, how she hastened to see Him and console Him! It was all in vain; the soldiers pushed her back and she was denied even the privilege granted to mothers to see before execution their condemned sons.

While tears flowed abundantly from Mary's eyes, her divine Son was being scourged. Think of it, my

friends, Jesus the Son of God being scourged ! His sacred flesh torn by the rods, His undefiled blood weaving a crimson garment for His lacerated body ! Think of it, for think you must and feel, if you want to understand even partially this sacrifice made for you. There He is tied to the pillar and around Him stands the soldiers and the rabble. Blow after blow falls upon His gentle, sensitive body. No murmur escapes His lips, no word of reproach, no cry for mercy. Meekly He endures all this horrible torture, the pain of every blow darts and quivers in His sacred Heart ; still no word of complaint, though He could have smitten by death these vile persecutors. The soldiers were cruel ; but warfare had inured them to this, and duty required them to obey orders. It seems to me that many of the Roman soldiers loved not such cruelty. In the history of early Christian times you find many examples of their magnanimity for the weak and detestation for excessive cruelty. The Jews were cruel, infamously cruel ; and they were cruel from malice. Yet, your divine Savior suffered their despicable malice to prevail. He was the victim and would not prevent the sacrifice, although a nod of His sacred Head would have prostrated His tormentors in death.

No wonder that Catholics recite the rosary ; no wonder they carry it with them wherever they go ; for it is the history of their Savior's love and of their Savior's agony. Every mystery unfolds a thousand thoughts, and every thought contains a prayer, and

every prayer is a stepping stone to heaven. How beautifully the Church perpetuates the memory of Jesus. The Rosary is an epitome of the sacred truths upon which her great foundation rests ; and millions read this epitome, meditate upon it, and model their hearts according to its grand conceptions. Thus, Jesus is not forgotten. The sacred blood which trickled to the earth from His wounds during the scourging, is still revered. The Catholic heart still sympathizes, still loves, and commemorates the anguish, and humiliation He endured, while it admires His patience and forbearance. All this devotion arises largely from the Rosary ; for every decade speaks to the Heart, every decade transmits His memory from generation to generation.

Let us kneel with the Mother of Jesus and compassionate her divine Son. Let us meditate upon the sharp, quivering shafts of pain which permeated His sacred body during this awful scourging. If the soldiers had no pity, if the Jews hated, let us at least have pity for Him and never by sin indicate that we would be so fiercely cruel as hate Him. Ah, let us ask Mary to teach us how to pity Him, how to be grateful to Him, how to love Him with our whole hearts ! In company with Mary we can pray better, better understand the stupendous, overawing work of the Redemption. In company with Mary we can better comply with the commandments of God, be better Children of His Church, and die with the hope-inspiring name of Jesus upon our lips. We should

be careful, very careful not to forfeit the merits which Jesus secured for us during His painful scourging. Our hearts should rise to Him in noblest strains of thanksgiving and gratitude. Our whole lives should be devoted to Him as an acknowledgment of our inexpressible appreciation of his infinite love. Yes, let us ask Mary to teach us to pray to Him; let us ask her to keep our hearts pure, that our aspirations may ascend to Him from fountains of love undefiled.

Deduction: Do not by any grievous sin join the Roman soldiers and malicious Jews, to strike the exposed, bleeding shoulders of your Savior and your God. Exert yourselves by many acts of kindness towards Him and toward His poor, to show Him how much you appreciate His love for you.

Let us say three Hail Marys that God may increase in our souls the purest aspirations of love to Jesus and Mary.

Fifteenth Day.

THE SEVENTH MYSTERY.

The Scourging at the Pillar Continued.

WHILE contemplating this mystery your hearts are melted into sympathy for the anguish endured during that awful scourging. You may even wish to visit that sacred spot consecrated by the precious blood of your Savior. Had you the opportunity you would kiss with reverence and love the hallowed earth upon which the fainting body of Jesus stood during that brutal ignominy. Yea, you would bring home some of that sacred earth; and you would keep it as a memorial of Christ's suffering and your own pilgrimage to that venerated spot. This would be worthy of you and thereby you would attest your great gratitude to your God. But you are not thus blessed. You can not kneel at those holy places and with tearful emotion pour out the tender, affectionate thanksgiving of your hearts; but what may seem strange to you when first expressed, you can do more. You can help God's afflicted and by so doing render your homage to your Redeemer. By your kindness you can banish sorrow from aching hearts; by your advice you can allay the pangs of troubled minds; by your alms you can expel the terrible craving of

hunger; and in doing these things to His creatures, you are doing them to Him. Hunger and cold are awful things. Be angels then, in appeasing hunger and banishing cold from the shivering limbs of those for whom Christ died.

Again, do not wound the hearts of others. If you do, then you are not pitying your lacerated, bleeding Savior. You are rather uniting with the scourgers to strike the helpless, mangled body of your Redeemer. Oh, how many Catholics are harsh and unmerciful to others! They have some fatal propensity to wound hearts; and seemingly they rejoice the more the deeper the poisoned darts of censure rankle in sorrowing hearts. Following some hellish design, they are happy in proportion to the pain they inflict. I say hellish design, because such purposes must be forged in hell or fashioned in hearts in which devils are the artists. From such hearts come fumes which destroy the tranquillity of neighbors, while they blast and wither the last flower of hope in the hearts of the unfortunate. Do they know what the heart of an ill-fated one suffers? Can they feel the agony of disgrace, the torture of shame, the loss of reputation, the forfeiture of God's grace? No; nor do they care to devote one moment to consider the struggle which preceded the fall, the exposure which occasioned the fall, the frailty which precipitated the fall. No, they have not any time to dwell upon such things, nor leisure to say a little prayer for the fallen; but unlimited time to slander, revile, and calumniate. They

might, however, pause to note the gain or estimate the loss caused to themselves by their vituperating tongues. They might understand or should remember that the accused may curse them and that the curses may be just and may have a deplorable effect. The wail of unfortunate hearts may be heard in heaven and the cry may find an avenger in the person of Almighty God. Our Savior did not only die for the busy-tongued, self-constituted good people ; but for the sinners whom pious cant and sanctimonious gossip would condemn. It may be too that those victims of slander may be innocent ; but whether innocent or guilty, we ought to mind our own business.

Now, while you commiserate your Savior, pray that you may be always charitable,—charitable in your helping hand, charitable in your prudent conversations, charitable to Jesus in being charitable to His creatures. If you have been guilty of immoderation make what reparation you can. As you in spirit behold the lashes falling upon the shoulders of your dear Savior; and in awe see His sacred blood spring forth at every blow, know that this great suffering was for sinners. Humbly offer Him your gratitude ; and ashamed of your own demeanor, beg Him to pardon you for any wounds you have caused in the hearts of others. Supplicate the Blessed Virgin to bear to Him your sympathy and your love. Entreat her to obtain forgiveness for any rash, unkind expression with which you have increased another's grief.

Deduction: Learn of Jesus and Mary how to pity

want, sorrow, and misfortune. While you are charitable toward all, implore the Queen of Angels and your Redeemer to be patient, charitable and forgiving toward yourselves. Often ask the Blessed Virgin to guard your hearts and your tongues.

Let us say three Hail Marys, supplicating God to increase in our souls the virtue of charity.

Sixteenth Day.

THE EIGHTH MYSTERY.

The Crowning with Thorns.

LET us, on this evening in May, contemplate the indignities and pain which your Redeemer suffered in this cruciating scene of His passion. He adds another persuasive proof of his love for mankind. At the Crowning of Thorns intense anguish and infinite love combine to show you the value of a human soul. Who can comprehend the debasement to which he submitted ; or the mercy which actuated such inexplicable degradation ? It is beyond your comprehension and mine. You are dumb at the astounding scene which you are considering. All you can do, is to pray and wonder. Benignly, indeed, does the Son of God abandon the court of heaven, where he could suffer no pain. He leaves His throne of splendor ; and exchanges the glories, the magnificence of heaven for a Crown of Thorns. Wonderful condescension ; amazing self-debasement, astonishing love !

This is not the crown which his blessed mother would entwine for His brow. Instead of twigs, she would have caresses ; instead of thorns she would have kisses ; instead of blood trickling down from

His sacred temples, she would bathe them in tears of affection. No, she would weave a different crown, and even angels would be at loss to know how to fashion a crown for the Son of God. Their genius would be exhausted ; and the resources of heaven would be summoned to prepare a crown suitable to the King of all creation ; but divine mercy and inexhaustible love make an incomparable crown of anguish and sneers and thorns for the brow of Mary's Child.

Ought you not this evening entwine a crown of prayer ; and as an offering of grateful, pitying hearts, ask Mary to lay it at His feet ? His Blessed Mother will assist you and be pleased at your devotion. Fashion the crown for Him from the purest aspirations, the loftiest emotions, your noblest deeds, and your most honorable achievements ; and stud these with the diamonds of prayer, the amethysts of sacrifice, and the rubies of love. Supplicate the Mother of Jesus to awaken in your souls every noblest thought, every dearest sentiment, every ardent virtue, that your crown of prayerful gratitude may be a heart-wreath of love to Him.

Would it not be a token of your affection, if you made a visit occasionally to Him in the great Sacrament of His love ? There you can speak with Him more intimately. Your hearts can hold converse with Him. At such solemn moments you can conceive more keenly His incomparable agony. You can feel in spirit how the sharp thorns pierce His

loving brow, and the awful pain of every thorn. Before the tabernacle you are better disposed to consider the humble residence which He has taken among men. He never ceases from lowering Himself in order to elevate you. You no doubt are thankful; but you should manifest that thankfulness by your visits to Him. Your devotion may attract others to Him and be thereby the means of subduing other hearts to His love. Besides you ought often make acts of reparation to Him for the perversity and ingratitude of those who prize not His love nor compassionate His agony.

In doing these things, how you will please the Blessed Virgin. She loves to see her divine Son honored and the overawing sacrifices of the Redemption venerated. By your devotion to Jesus you become a child of Mary, a dutiful and affectionate child who pities her anguish and the untold agony of her divine Son. A friendship will be established between you; a friendship which will endure to the end, a friendship which will bestow many blessings upon you, a friendship which will bring Jesus and Mary to your dying couch! Ah, how happy is he who calls Mary his mother and whom Mary calls her child. Adversity may come, friends may prove traitors, but Mary will be a guiding light in adversity and a steadfast friend when all others have vanished.

Deduction: Say a little prayer every day to Jesus as an act of reparation for the indignities and ingratitude of bad Catholics. Entreat Mary to increase in

your souls a closer union with Jesus, and beg her to call you always her children.

Let us say three Hail Marys, praying that we may always be children of Mary.

Seventeenth Day.

THE EIGHTH MYSTERY.

The Crowning of Thorns Continued.

YOU may again ponder with profit upon the Crowning of your Savior with thorns. Indeed, you ought frequently meditate upon every mystery of the Holy Rosary. By so doing you will live nearer to Jesus and He will be near to you in your sorrows. To dwell upon these mysterious truths of religion, affords a powerful preventive to sin. No Catholic can sin while contemplating Jesus crowned with thorns. As he sees in spirit the sacred blood oozing from the thorn-pierced head, there is in his soul no audience-room for sin. Besides an abhorrence for sin fills his soul, when he reflects to what extreme rashness his uncontrolled passions may lead him. A notable example of such rashness you find related by this mystery. While piously dwelling upon it you say to yourselves: What frantic madness has seized the Jews! Behold, Pilate presents Jesus to the people. His purpose is to allay their frenzy and to move them to sympathy. But listen, they cry out: "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" They are mad with fury. Nothing will appease them. Pilate, a pagan, declares he finds no fault in Him. He is

timid, but just. The Jews, though they believe in God, are so crazed by malice that they are viciously unjust, while the pagan, judging according to the law and testimony, declares Jesus innocent. Jesus is only a Jew in the eyes of Pilate, still he defends Him against the Jews; strives to protect Him from the frenzy of His own country men. Evidently, the pagan was a magnanimous man; he sought only to administer justice; but the vehement cries of the Jews made him yield Innocence to their madness.

What must have been the agony of His Blessed Mother as she beheld her divine Son before the people, and heard Pilate say: "Behold the man!" In mockery the soldiers had dressed Him in some purple rag and hailed Him King of the Jews. The crown of thorns was upon His head; blood was flowing from His wounds; and in this apparent helpless condition, He stood before the sneers and savage howling of the Jews. The mother saw His lamentable state, heard the Jews' fierce cry: "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Truly, the prophecy of Simeon was fulfilled—a sword was piercing her gentle heart. What anguish rankled in her tender bosom! What thorns pierced her heart? What tears rushed from her sleepless eyes! Pause, my friends, upon this scene and compassionate Jesus and His mother. It is difficult to say which suffered the more. Let your prayers be messengers from your hearts to them, thanking them for their great love, begging them to keep you free from mortal sin.

Remember to be always just. The pagan teaches you and me a lesson. You believe that Jesus is the Son of God, you believe that Mary is His mother. Then, be not more unjust than the pagan. Do not imitate the Jews, neither allow malice to blind your judgment, nor hatred inflame your tongues. When you are inclined to speak unkindly of another, recall the scene before Pilate. Gaze upon your thorn-crowned Savior. Hear the vocifications of the Jews: "Crucify Him, crucify Him." Listen to Pilate: "I find no fault in the man." Then, O then, declare for innocence! If the object of your remarks is an enemy, then look upon the bruised, bleeding form of your Savior and be merciful.

Every day of your lives you should say some prayer in atonement for your sins and as a remembrance of Christ's Passion. No prayer can be better than the rosary. If you have not time to say it all, at least say one decade. You can say it, if you have no other opportunity, while working or walking to work. Such devotion will teach you to be just. It will make the precepts of your holy religion practical. It will mould your lives, direct your energies, promote your charity, and make you children of Jesus and Mary. This beautiful month of Spring should draw all of this congregation to Mary's altar. Here you kneel to contemplate her sorrows and her love, to entwine a garland of affection for her beauteous brow, while you do homage to her divine Son. This month ought to make us better, more merciful,

more practical in our devotions, more christian in our conduct, and bring us closer to Jesus and Mary.

Deduction : Think frequently upon the grand virtue of justice. Ask Jesus to prevent you from ever doing an act of injustice to anyone. Entreat the Queen of Angels to melt your hearts into purest sympathy for the thorn-crowned Redeemer.

Let us say three Hail Marys that Jesus may bless us with the virtue of justice, and with willingness to comply with its teaching.

Eighteenth Day.

THE NINTH MYSTERY.

The Carrying of the Cross.

ON that ever to be remembered Good Friday there was excitement in Jerusalem and amazement in heaven. Excitement ran high on the streets of Jerusalem as Jesus advanced, bearing the heavy weight of the cross. Blasphemy greeted him at every step. Frenzy stared from the eyes of many ; and hundreds with a wild, morbid curiosity desired to see the crucifixion. There was no one now to spread his garments beneath the feet of Jesus as He painfully tottered along the way to Calvary. No olive branches now strew the streets of Jerusalem in His honor. What a desolating change had come upon the people ! Hossanas were exchanged for imprecations and yells. How vain and transitory are the praises of men ; and how fleeting the honors of earth !

What had Jesus done to merit such brutality ? Had He rebelled against legitimate authority or stirred up sedition ? Not so : He had said to the lepers, " be ye clean " and they rejoice at the return of health. To the blind He had given the faculty of vision and they gaze in wonderment at the earth and heavens. To the deaf and dumb were given

hearing and speech. To everyone He was kind and gentle, going about doing good to all. But malice and hatred had expelled from the hearts of the Jews reason and justice. To appease their wrath He must die upon the cross.

What anguish did not the Blessed Virgin endure as she heard the jeers and scoffs poured out upon her divine Son by a maddened mob! How her tender heart quaked with grief and compassion at that awful sight. Together they went. He bearing the cross for man's Redemption, she bearing a cross in her heart. Ought we not come this evening and kneel at her feet and tender to her the purest thoughts of our hearts? Ah, yes; and you do. Next to Jesus, you love her most. Every Hail Mary you say is a proof of that love. Your presence here before her altar demonstrates that love; and your attachment to Jesus is evidence of that love. You entwine a garland of Hail Marys for her brow; but your whole heart and soul, everything you have you offer to her divine Son.

During that journey to Calvary's summit, what amazement there was among the angels of heaven. They look down in astonishment and wonder upon the horrible scene which was transpiring at Jerusalem. They longed for a command from the eternal throne to go to the relief of the Son of God. They beheld Him patiently suffering every jeer, saw in horror the blood flowing from His wounds, perceived His features carved by pain; and yet no order came

to rescue Him from the crazed populace. They knew too that Himself had power to crush His vicious executors and wondered at His submission. They remembered how once the bad angels had risen against God and for their disobedience were punished with endless torments. They saw the brilliant hosts of heaven shorn of glory and hunted into the abyss of hell. Man had often rebelled; and now malice and cruelty are added to rebellion. The Person of Jesus, the Son of God, Whom they beheld in His splendor in the mansions of His eternal Father, is attacked and dragged to an ignominious death. The angels of heaven see those things and no wonder they are overwhelmed with amazement. They might have said to themselves: "What is there in this vile creature, man, that our eternal King is so mindful of Him! The angels revolted and immediately they were driven from happiness into everlasting perdition. There is man continuously rebelling, always insulting God, now inflicting keenest pain upon our eternal Lord and Master; and still the pain, the perversity, and rebellion are submitted to with meekness and patience."

Yea, the angels of heaven wondered; and no doubt the devils in hell were astonished at so much extravagance in mercy and love. Now should we not join with the angels in praising the forbearance and beneficence of God? Should we not beg pardon of Him for all our transgressions and unite with the Blessed Virgin in offering Him the truest worship of

our hearts? We are unworthy to be called His children, then let us kneel at the feet of His Blessed Mother, and entreat her to pray for us, advise us, to direct us, that every thought of our souls and every action of our bodies may be the richest incense of gratitude to Him.

Deduction : Often ask Jesus to assist you in carrying your cross with submissiveness to His holy will, and to enable you to carry your cross bravely till He takes it from your shoulders at the threshold of heaven. Never forget to implore the Blessed Virgin to accompany you on your journey and to be with you when you have reached your Calvary with your cross.

Let us say three Hail Marys that Jesus and Mary may help us to carry our crosses.

Nineteenth Day.

THE NINTH MYSTERY.

The Carrying of the Cross Continued.

IT is well for us to learn from the life of our divine Redeemer. Every principle He enunciated, every act He performed, is instructive. We should be His disciples and acquire knowledge from Him. Since He is the Son of God, He is infinitely wise ; and therefore, most competent to teach. He counsels us to do nothing except what is for our benefit here and hereafter. His wise precepts are the pillars of society and of true success. History attests the truth of this statement. Individuals and nations that have abandoned His laws have been involved in disaster and ruin. His teachings are simple, and compared with modern philosophy, are infinitely superior. Angels, no doubt, wonder why man learns not more from His precepts. The angels know Him better than we do. They know Him in His majesty and mercy and love ; and marvel that man, for whom He has done so much, regards Him so lightly.

On His painful journey to Calvary He teaches as persuasively as He did His apostles during His transfiguration on Mount Tabor ; or when He preached that beautiful sermon upon the Mount. On the Mount

He taught : "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy ; blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled." As He bears His cross upon His lacerated shoulders, He tells us most forcibly of the virtue of mercy and exhorts us to search for justice—for the source of all justice, His eternal Father. On that journey what mercy He exhibits ! And by His mercy thus manifested, does He not implore us to be merciful to one another ? He told His disciples to love one another. Oppressed with the cross for man's salvation, His looks entreat us to be merciful and charitable to one another. On Mount Tabor He was transfigured and enveloped in His glory ; on His way to Calvary He is transfigured and enveloped in love and mercy.

He falls often on that journey from weakness ; still every fall is a lesson to us and a proof of His mercy. He teaches us by those falls, that in our weakness we should go to Him ; and should we have the misfortune of falling under the infamous weight of mortal sin, we should not remain prostrated, but appeal to him for assistance and pardon. While He was carrying His cross, the angels were restrained from rushing to His aid, His eternal Father permitted all the abuse and cruelty of that memorable Good Friday, Himself submitted to all the insults and torture of the mob ; and this total abandonment of Jesus to the infuriated Jews, teaches us what a magnanimous friend we have in Him ; He seems to say to us : "I am your friend ; when you are friendless, come to me ; I know the

need of a friend and can sympathize with you. When the world rejects you, come to me, you will find an asylum in my heart."

Ought we not kneel this evening with Mary, His mother, and thank Him for His love and mercy and friendship? Should not our prayers, like the perfume of the flowers, encircling her statue upon her altar, envelop her who was the constant friend to her Son on that sorrowful way? This month is luxuriant in love for the Queen of Heaven. Holy recollections cluster around it and awaken prayer to her, the Queen of May. At her altar the soul assumes new life. The heart wells forth the purest sentiments of devotion, and this devotion draws you nearer to her divine Son. How many a request is made of Mary during this month, and how many a favor is granted by her intercession. At her feet virtue is cultivated, pious resolutions are formed, confidence in God is established or renewed, and the human soul finds rest in her friendship.

See her influence with Catholics who love her. Do they love God less for their affection to her? No; they love Him more. She teaches the soul the greatness, the mercy, the benignity of God. She is always holding him up to your adoration, just as she did for the three kings who adored Him in the stable at Bethelhem. By her meekness and gentleness she draws you to herself, then she presents Jesus to you, and you and Jesus and Mary become friends. How holy and profitable it is to kneel at her altar! What

an inestimable favor bestowed upon us ! With what fervor in devotion, with what confidence in prayer, with what love and fidelity to Jesus, you kneel at her feet ! Observe the child who grows under her loving care. See its hands joined in holy thought. Note the peace on the child's face. How tranquil, how innocent, how devout ! Does Mary lead that child's heart from God, as some maintain ; that the child forgets God in loving Mary ? Ah, no ; look upon that child and you will determine otherwise, look upon that innocent face and you will wish, every Protestant would wish, that all children were blessed with the same piety. Teach the young to love Mary, that they may ever have Jesus, her divine Son, for a friend.

Deduction. Never pass by a Catholic church without saying : Jesus, be my friend ; Jesus, assist me to carry my cross ; Jesus, teach me to love you more and more !

Let us say three Hail Marys, begging of Jesus to teach us how to live and how to die.

Twentieth Day.

THE TENTH MYSTERY.

The Crucifixion.

IN this mystery you contemplate the cruel death of your Savior and the agony of His Blessed Mother. In pious thought you hear the blows of the hammer driving the nails into the sacred flesh of your Redeemer ; you see the nerves quiver under the awful pain ; and from your hearts go forth sympathy, gratitude, and love. Roughly the cross is raised, and what must have been the torture endured, when the foot of the cross fell into the socket made for it in the earth ! The terrible jar caused every nerve to tremble with agony. Ah, how much did Jesus suffer that man may be freed from the bondage of sin ! And by what pain was that freedom wrenched from the powers of hell !

Now you can in some measure feel what anguish a mother endures, who is an eye witness of her son's execution. Yea, you have even seen the tears gushing from a mother's eyes, when she held her dying infant to her heart. She knew her babe would be happy, that it would escape the snares, the heart-aches, and the deceits of life ; yet her sorrow and suffering were intense. What then must the Blessed

Virgin have suffered, when she saw Jesus nailed upon the cross. The execution was not momentary. It lasted for three hours, and during those three dreadful hours, the mother knelt at the feet of her crucified Son. Every moment was an age ! and every moment had a new arrow of pain for her tender heart ! What anguish, what pain, what tears ! Jesus bore the accumulated sin of mankind ; the mother endured the concentration of its pain. She being immaculate, being the mother of the Son of God, had a most sensitive, delicate nature ; and therefore no other human being ever felt for a moment the pain which tortured every fibre of her heart.

How closely she is allied to the Redemption and how great should be our love for her ! Next to God there is no one to whom we are indebted so much. All the saints, though honored and glorious, are incomparable with her. God has elevated her above all creation ; her intercession is the most powerful ; her friendship the most desirable ; her counsel, the purest wisdom. Some devout persons in their zealous veneration and love for some particular saint forget Mary. Their patron saints must regret such lack of love for the Queen of Angels and of saints. The inhabitants of heaven love and venerate her who can say : " Jesus is my Child." After that profound homage and love which should be the first fruits of the soul to its Creator, the human heart should exhale its sublimest devotion to the Mother of Jesus. What she can not obtain for you, is not obtainable.

What she will not do for her confiding children, would be an injury to them, did they have it in their possession. She is the watchful guardian of the children of Christ; she will heed their prayers, and protect them from the evils of life.

At the crucifixion there was a strange groupe. Two thieves were crucified with the Savior of the human race, and a sinner wept at the foot of His cross. To one thief was promised paradise; and if you except the Mother of Jesus, there was no other creature whose heart was so pierced by pain as Mary Magdalene's. The repentent thief's suffering was assuaged by the joy of conversion and the efficiency of grace. The penitent at the foot of the cross saw her meek and humble friend Jesus languish in pain; and her heart too was cleft with the lance of grief. She remembered how kind He had been to her, how forgiving, how merciful; and this remembrance intensified her sorrow and multiplied the aching of her mournful heart. Mark, she was in the company, in the friendship of the Mother of Jesus, thereby teaching us if we desire to be near Jesus we must not be far from His mother.

From this sad scene, from the last hours of Jesus, what confidence, what hope can the sinner not gather. A libertine dying at His side finds mercy and pardon and heaven; a penitent sinner at His feet is, after His mother, His dearest friend and weeps the anguish of her heart in tears. All this imparts hope to sinners; Jesus dying on the cross is the most persuasive

proof of His love for them; but He is not content with this demonstration of His charity, He gives them a visible evidence of His love by grouping around Himself in the last moments of His life, two whom the world once called reprobates. Let the sinner take heart, let him or her fall at the feet of Jesus, and a new life will arise from the barren sinful soul.

Deduction : In order to be a friend of your Redeemer, be always near His Blessed Mother. She will teach you how to love Him more and more; and when you do not get all for which you ask, be assured you are better off by not getting the things denied you.

Let us say three Hail Marys as an act of compassion for the five wounds of Jesus.

Twenty-first Day.

THE TENTH MYSTERY.—*Crucifixion Continued.*

THE memories of the Blessed Virgin bring you to the foot of her altar this beautiful evening in May. Her kindness and gentleness attract you. As you kneel in prayer, your thoughts revert to other Mays now hidden in by-gone years. Some of you whose cares indicate that many summers have passed since you first entwined in your young hearts a wreath of Hail Marys for the Queen of heaven, recall the joys you experienced in childhood at her altar. Those moments were the happiest in your lives. You felt then a gentle peace filling your hearts and you believed that Jesus was near; and often since that happy time you have been convinced that He was there with you. You were Mary's children and Mary's children are the children of Jesus. She draws you to her; and when you are clustered in prayer around her, she points you to heaven and to her divine Son. What delight she must enjoy as she sees her children young and old in adoration before God; and when she knows she has been the shepherdess who led so many to Him, how happy she must be. To bring people to Him, to be the star directing the wanderer to Him, affords her great pleasure. If you would help her, how grateful she would be to you.

She would reward you with her great favors and you certainly would die a happy death.

The stable and Calvary have endeared her to you. In both places you learn her gentleness and lament her sorrow. Age after age has been counted on the dial of time, since the Centurion drove his lance into the Sacred Heart of Jesus ; yet devotion to Mary and homage to Jesus have increased with every generation. The mother is so closely associated with her child, that when you think of Jesus, Mary will come to your mind, and when you think of Mary, thoughts of Jesus fill your souls; and when your hearts are engaged with both, how blessed you are. What training is more useful and beneficent than that acquired at Mary's altar and at the tabernacle where Jesus lives for you? He remains with you during all the storms of life. When you are tossed upon the billows of injustice and disappointment, the recollection of childhood at the altars of Jesus and Mary calms the tempest while it points to heaven. When your hearts are brimming with joy, somehow the memory of those happy moments will pervade the soul, lest by any mischance the joy might be changed to sin. The culture acquired at her altar is the purest and the most permanent. It induces you to say your prayers morning and night, and often during the day you find yourselves repeating some little prayer. It brings you to mass on Sunday, it makes you kind, just, and faithful. It is a shield in danger, it is your counsel in trouble, it is your fortitude at the hour of death.

How irresistibly the sufferings of Jesus and Mary have drawn the human heart. Even the Centurion had no sooner stained his lance with the Sacred Blood of Jesus, than he was impressed with some mysterious esteem for Jesus of Nazareth. And since that Centurion gave by his blow completion to the crucifixion, countless millions have bowed before the cross, adored Jesus, and loved His Blessed Mother. The cross is the banner of Christianity. When the bursting heart of Columbus arose to God in noblest thanksgiving for the discovery of a new world, the cross was raised upon the virgin shore of the Western hemisphere, and Mary's hymn was the first which a white man's lips ever sang upon the newly discovered land. The cross accompanied every exploring party. It was planted upon the banks of majestic rivers, in dense forests, upon lofty mountains. No lake was sailed, no enterprise undertaken, no mission founded without that venerated emblem of the crucifixion. And everywhere the cross was raised, hymns in honor of the Queen of Heaven were chanted. The savage was told of Jesus crucified, of heaven, of the immortality of the soul and of Mary, the star of the Sea. That was an age of faith, an age when missionaries did not enrich themselves with spoils, an age when the salvation of the natives was the one stupendous, overmastering thought which stimulated the missionary, sustained his fortitude, and nourished his perseverance.

Such devotion and fortitude were born at the foot

of the cross. They were exemplified in the Blessed Virgin and Mary Magdalene, and have been the nourishment of the missionary and martyr, of pope and priest, of nun and monk, and all the faithful in every danger and turbulence from the crucifixion of Jesus until the present moment. The blood of Jesus was not shed in vain, the grief of Mary has been fruitful. Faith, hope, and charity draw their sustenance from Jesus ; and Mary's example is a sublime, persuasive inducement to millions to practise these virtues.

Deduction : Have a crucifix and a statue of the Blessed Virgin in your room. They are good companions. Your grief will find solace in gazing upon them. They will teach you how to live, they will tell you how to die.

Let us say three Hail Marys for a happy death.

Twenty-second Day.

THE ELEVENTH MYSTERY.

The Resurrection.

ON Easter Sunday morning the heart of every devout Catholic overflows with joyous sentiment. The feast of the Resurrection infuses joy and praise. Just as Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, took sweet spices to annoint Jesus in the sepulchre, so Catholics, on this happy feast, take to their churches the first fruits of their hearts to offer to Jesus. They bring to Him the purest, the noblest sentiments of their souls ; and kneeling before His modern sepulchre, the tabernacle, they offer them to Him. Even this evening you come with the same laudable purpose. You come to show your esteem for Mary and your love and gratitude to her divine Son. Kneeling here before Him in the tabernacle, you pour out your hearts in His presence. In silent adoration you tell Him of your sorrows and disappointments, of your joys and your triumphs. At His feet you place them all as the offering of grateful hearts. He is pleased with your gifts, for they indicate your attachment and your confidence. How many a sorrow He has banished from woeful hearts ! How many a tear He has wiped away ! How many an advice He has given to those who kneel at His altar !

As the two Marys approached the sepulchre they were troubled how they could roll away the stone ; but when they reached the spot where their Redeemer was buried, they found the stone removed ; and entering they beheld an angel. He told them what had happened—that Jesus had risen as He had foretold. Now note the constancy of these two devoted women. They knew, a guard had been placed about the tomb, and that the stone at the entrance was very great ; still they did not remain at home, making excuses for not going or fearing difficulty from the obstacles in the way. No, they did not act thus ; but with fervent loyalty to their God set out for the sepulchre. Might not many an undevout Catholic learn a lesson from these pious women ? Catholics who never attend a devotion in May ought to ponder upon the fidelity of these faithful persons, and compare their own ingratitude with the fervor which animated these early visitants to the tomb. Such reflection and comparison may awaken some affectionate chord of their hearts and subdue them into love for their Redeemer. If the example of the two Marys would lead them to the feet of the Blessed Virgin on some evening of this beautiful month, they would soon seek Jesus in the sepulchre on our altar. Having acquired the friendship of Mary, they will not stay at home, multiplying imaginary obstacles and empty excuses, but set out for church to pay homage to their Creator. Impelling love for Jesus destroys all barriers and surmounts all

obstacles. They find that the happiest hours are those devoted to converse with God ; that the most tranquil are those passed before the altar.

The devotion and fidelity shown by Mary Magdalene are marvellous. From the moment of her conversion to the last sigh on earth she was faithful to her Friend. During all the ignominy of His sacred passion she was staunch and persistent in her loyalty. She was the last to leave His tomb, the first to visit it on the morning of the Resurrection. What a gentle, winning virtue is kindness ! How many a sigh it has suppressed ! How many a moan it has soothed ! It has fed the hungry, it has clothed the naked, it has infused hope, banished despondency, converted failure into triumph. Jesus was kind to Mary Magdalene when she had no friend ; and His kindness made her a saint and His friend in all adversity. The more He was debased, the firmer was her friendship. Might we not learn a lesson from the kindness and friendship of Jesus and Mary Magdalene ? While Jesus was on earth, he was constantly teaching lessons of greatest value. In freeing Mary Magdalene from the fetters of sin, He imparted much useful knowledge to us. By this act He impresses us with the potency of kindness. He instills into our minds what great efficacy kindness has on a depressed heart, and how pleasing to Him is every act of kindness to His creatures. Moreover, by pardoning Mary Magdalene, He persuades sinners of His mercy ; He bids them come to Him as she did, and that they and He

will be friends ; that their hearts will be filled with love and constancy to Him ; and that this love and constancy will fill their hearts with joy and peace ; yea, this love and constancy will make them likewise saints. The Resurrection will then be for them solace, hope, and eternal salvation. The sinner and Jesus become friends, and united in this friendship is the mother of Jesus. Just as Mary Magdalene loved to be in the company of the Blessed Virgin, so do all converted sinners love to be children of Mary. In her company they are friends of Jesus, are near Jesus ; and while remaining with that Immaculate Mother, they know their salvation is secure.

Deduction : Often do acts of kindness in the name and for the greater honor of Jesus. This virtue will then be a perennial spring in your heart whence placid, grateful, earnest thoughts will rise ; and your souls will be enriched with the blessings of Jesus and the companionship of Mary, His mother.

Let us say three Hail Marys that we may learn virtue from Jesus and Mary.

Twenty-third Day.

THE ELEVENTH MYSTERY.

The Resurrection Continued.

YOU considered yesterday evening how Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, went the first Easter Sunday morning to anoint Jesus in the sepulchre; and no doubt you wondered why the Blessed Virgin was not with them. Was she so exhausted and spent with grief that she was unable to go, or had that painful Good Friday so enfeebled her health, that she was unwell? Surely she was fatigued and broken-hearted. Still she knew what her divine Son had predicted; and was persuaded by His prediction, that He would rise on Easter Sunday morning. Consequently she might have told the others that they would not find His body in the tomb; or an angel might have announced to her the Resurrection; or even our divine Savior himself might have appeared to her immediately after His departure from the sepulchre. Whether these conjectures are true or not, there was some cause which deterred her from going. Probably her reliance upon His prediction was a sufficient guaranty for her and a positive assurance that the visitants to the tomb would find that He had risen. Had she gone, some sceptic would now say and would often have

said, that she had no faith in His prophecy. Her remaining away demonstrates her faith and deprives the infidel of an argument. The things which God superintends, are wisely managed.

You do well this evening in collecting about her altar, and thus extending to her your praises and your veneration. She will not forget your devotion. In the time of sorrow she will prove herself faithful to you. She is the mother of the afflicted. Who knows affliction better than she? Yet those who have suffered, know best how to sympathize. She has experienced the most cruel pangs of affliction; and therefore the most ready of all created beings to pity and to assist the unfortunate. She knows too how kindness and sympathy relieve the depressed, aching heart. Her few human friends did not forsake her, but did all in their power to calm her grief and dry the tears in her swollen eyes. On that sad Good Friday night angels also strove to assuage her sorrow and diminish her anguish. She knows, therefore, what devotedness, sympathy, and affliction are; she certainly defends and protects everyone having confidence in her. By your devotion this evening how much you venerate her and love her divine Son. You rejoice in the Resurrection and are grateful to God for this opportunity to manifest your esteem for the Mother of Sorrows.

When the pious, devoted women entered the sepulchre, they beheld an angel who thus addressed them: "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth Who was cruci-

fied, He is risen." And without doubt the angels of God when they see you this evening coming into your Church to venerate the Blessed Virgin, say to your hearts: "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He is risen; but behold the place where they laid Him. Here He lives humbly, meekly, affectionately in the tabernacle on your altar. Come and adore your Redeemer and your God. Mary Magdalene and Mary her companion learned that Jesus had risen—the tomb was abandoned by your Savior. They found Him not there; but here in the tabernacle He lives for you. This evening you have come to visit Him. Behold the infinite mercy and love which induced Him to abide among you! How blessed you are in having such opportunities to come to Him! You know not what great favors are heaped upon you by the kind condescension of your God. Your hearts should be one constant, generous prayer of love and thanksgiving for His affable, beneficent friendship. Ever love Him. Bring others to love Him. Love to come to Him here in His humble abode; and if you wish to find His Blessed Mother, there is no other place, except heaven, where you will so surely meet her. Love too the Queen of Angels, for Jesus is her Son!"

Angels, my friends, often rejoice at your devotion to Jesus in the adorable sacrament of the altar. They are happy in seeing so many faithful souls among the vast numbers who are ungrateful, unadoring, and distant. But, now, I may ask what conducted you

hither this evening? What impelled you to visit your divine Lord? What has so directed your love to Jesus that you have become the admiration of angels? Oh, was it not His mother? Was it not she who influenced you? She awakened a desire in your hearts to attend these devotions performed in her honor, knowing that such piety would bring you to the feet of her divine Son. She loves you and knew when you attend the May devotions that you depart with the benediction of Jesus in your souls. What a wonderful missionary the Blessed Virgin is! In various and inexplicable ways she reaches the heart and brings it to receive the blessings of God. She wants you to be children of Mary, that you may be children of your heavenly Father. During this month to how many a heart does she speak? She entreats, supplicates, begs Catholics to attend the May devotions, that they may kneel where angels love to adore, that their souls may be replenished with divine grace, that they may regain courage, fortitude and rise too from the dead, rise glorious and immortal at the last day to love Jesus forever in His kingdom.

Deduction: Coax others to attend the May devotions. By bringing many to Mary you bring them to Jesus. Assist Mary in her loving work. She would have everyone to love her Son. Help her in her noble work and Jesus will bless you with a happy resurrection at the Last Day.

Let us say three Hail Marys that we may be successful in leading many to Mary and to God.

Twenty-fourth Day.

THE TWELFTH MYSTERY.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ Into Heaven.

OUR divine Savior, on the day upon which He left earth and returned to His eternal Father, gathered around Him for the last time on earth His disciples. After His Resurrection He remained on earth forty days, appearing often to His disciples, instructing them for their great mission to the human race, and bestowing upon them vast and marvellous powers. At the end of forty days He collected them upon Mount Olivet, and from their midst ascended into heaven. How suitable a place He selected for His ascension! From the place where His passion began He departed to His eternal mansions. What events had transpired within two months! What triumphs for Jesus, what victories won for mankind! When He entered the Garden of Olivet, man was a slave of Satan; heaven was barred against the human race; Limbo was the habitation of the just dead. When He ascended into heaven every human creature was redeemed; the justice of Almighty God was appeased; and ere night fell upon Mount Olivet, heaven was opened and the prisoners of Limbo rejoiced in the presence of their God.

His ascension taking place from the locality where His passion began, impresses us with the grandeur and importance of His triumph. The divine Conqueror had trodden the thorny ways of pain and humiliation; but was not subdued by them. On Ascension Thursday He rose into heaven, but not until He had suffered injustice, treachery, and scorn. Is there not a lesson in all this for you and me? Does it not teach us that to ascend to heaven, we must imitate the patience and fidelity of Jesus; that we must endure adversity, injustice, ingratitude, and numerous other ills. Forcibly and grandly He exhibits our triumphs by the magnificence of His own. If we be faithful, from the midst of our trials we shall rise by His almighty power. Heaven must be taken by force; and that force requires the greatest bravery and persistency. Life is not so long for any human being, but still it is long enough for trials, sorrows, and tears. In one day, Good Friday, behold how grievous and numberless were the pains of the Son of God. If the accumulated agony and fears of a single human heart for a lifetime could be seen, they would overawe us by their immensity and fill us with pity for their victim. Still, it is these very things which keep you on the way to heaven. They make that way thorny, but without them you would be travelling the apparently rosy highway to perdition.

It is these thorns which make you cry aloud to Jesus for mercy and aid; it is these ills which com-

pel you to seek consolation before the tabernacle ; it is these arrows, piercing the heart, which directs your thoughts to Calvary and the cross ; it is the heartache and the wrong which subdue you into supplication to the mother of Jesus. How much sweetness is exhaled from the ills of life ! How much closer, more affectionate, and attached you become to Mary on account of the bitterness of your days on earth ! What friendship they beget between you and her ! She loves you more for your sorrows. You love her more for her prayers, kindness, encouragement, and watchful care. You are her children, she is your most gracious mother.

In this regard you may learn another lesson from Jesus. The Blessed Virgin did not die first. She survived her divine Son. He did not, of course, depend upon her for any heavenly aid ; still, in the natural order of things, He needed those temporal comforts which a mother can bestow. Do you not need hundreds of things which she can give you and obtain for you ? If she was beneficial to the Son of God can she not be useful to you ? If she consoled Him in the bitterness of His life, can she not help you when too much gall is commingled with yours ? Remember also, that she was constantly with Him during His passion, that after His Resurrection she saw Him often ; and from Mount Olivet she gazed upon Him as He was enveloped in the glory of the heavens. From the manger to Mount Olivet she was with Him. Might not mothers learn from this

to dedicate their infants to Mary, that from the cradle to the grave she may be with them ; caressing them, pitying them, encouraging them, and raising them to heaven? Might not you, too, learn from the divine economy of the Redemption and the great part which Mary took therein, to keep her always for a mother, to pour out your gratitude to her for all her tender care, to beg of her that you may imitate her Son ; to entreat her that you may triumph by her prayers.

Since she was unceasingly with Jesus, shall you not be nearer to Him by being nearer to her? Can you be near Jesus and far from her ; or near her and far from Jesus? No ; to be close to one proves you are dear and close to the other. You are taught by this triumphal ascension of Jesus into heaven that you shall ascend to Him if you be always in the company of Mary. Her companionship is desirable ; her guidance unerring ; her influence upon the human heart most gracious ; her presence at the couch of death, most cheering.

Deduction : Mothers, train your children to love Mary. They will then love Jesus. They will grow up under her influence, be cultured by her teaching, aided by her intercession, guided by her counsel, and at the end of life will ascend to Jesus, their Savior.

Let us say three Hail Marys that Jesus may be as gracious to us as to the penitent thief.

Twenty-fifth Day.

THE TWELFTH MYSTERY.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ Continued.

SHORTLY before the ascension of our divine Redeemer into heaven, He discoursed to the Apostles upon the hatred which men would bear toward them, that they would be despised and persecuted for His sake, and that the time was approaching when He must return to His eternal Father. He saw the effect of His words upon the Apostles and added: "Because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart." (St. John XVI, 6.) Their chief sorrow sprang from the announcement of His departure. They were loath to part from Him. His presence had imparted courage ; His words, wisdom; His benedictions, divine grace. From his divine Person radiated grace and friendship which filled their souls and lifted their hearts to heaven. Indeed, in His companionship they experienced the peace which abides around the throne of God. But now they are to be separated and sadness seizes upon their hearts. No wonder. They had been drawn to Him by His gentleness, wisdom, power, and friendship. To separate was sorrowful; to meet persecution without its personally presence was doleful.

What would the future bring them? What tribulation, what malice, what kind of death?

Turn the contemplation of the Apostles upon yourselves. How ought you feel when Jesus is about to part from you on account of your sins? What dolefulness should depress your souls when on account of your transgression you drive Him from you? Mark, He leaves you reluctantly. You expel Him from your hearts. He wishes to remain in your souls, but you cruelly banish Him. Observe your behavior to Him and compare your conduct with that of the Apostles. Some may grieve at His departure and mourn their rashness. These hasten to confession and at His feet lament their weakness, decry their wickedness, and beg Him to take up once more His abode with them. Others, and Catholics too, have no regret at His absence. They make no atonement. Yea, they want Him not. They rejoice at His going. They are now unadmonished by Him, unrestrained; and consequently can indulge to excess in every violation of His law. Miserable wretches! They depart from Jesus and sink into debauchery. They abandon virtue and drink to intoxication from the streams of vice. Into ruin they will unexpectedly fall and what calamity will come upon them!

The sinfulness of such Catholics suggests another thought which naturally arise from the Savior's discourse with His apostle on this occasion. He foretells persecutions and trials. Might not much of the suffering of the Church in our day, in fact in all times,

be laid to the charge of indifferent or bad Catholics? Sinful Catholics and those others who value their own fortunes more than they do those of the Church, bring sorrow and reproach upon the spouse of Christ. Bad Catholics do not set a good example. Their excesses are, by vicious persons, attributed to the Church. You hear it said with a sneer: "Oh, he is a Catholic." By bad Catholics I mean those who lead a life of public depravity; but you have seen other bad Catholics whom we may, for the purpose of distinguishing them, call indifferent or treacherous. These do more harm than the others; for they are in possession of some wealth and influence. These will not send their children to parochial schools and they ape the manners of those outside of the Church. Their great purpose is success, success for themselves and their children and anything sacred which intervenes or opposes that success, is ignored and condemned. This conduct has brought much woe upon the Church and has retarded her progress.

Of course, such behavior separates the offenders from Jesus, their Redeemer. The children never hear the name of Jesus spoken with reverence. They are deprived of a training which conducts to Jesus and which has Him for its great object. Both parents and children of this kind care not for the departure of Jesus from them. Sorrow does not fill their hearts. It is for things of this life, they seek and to the acquisition of these they bend all their energies. Turning away from their Savior without any regret, they

forsake His Blessed Mother also. They come not under her refining, culturing influence. They speak not with devotion the sweet inspiring names of Jesus and Mary. They kneel not before her altar, they supplicate not her prayers, they are not fashioned by these soul-enriching virtues which are her special ornaments.

After the ascension St. John was particularly blessed by her company. How much he was esteemed by our divine Lord and how great an estimate Jesus had of his fidelity, when He placed the Blessed Virgin in his care. Jesus had confidence in him, He knew him and gave her into his keeping. St. John is called the beloved disciple ; and we may learn from the friendship and love which Jesus had for him, that He loves those and exalts them who love His mother. By honoring St. John in so affectionate a manner, He convinces us that it is the noblest natures who love Mary most.

Deduction : Do not banish Jesus from you. Imitate the Apostles and desire Him to remain always with you ; and after Jesus love His Blessed Mother. This love will exalt you, will increase your love for Jesus, and be a promise of endless felicity with Jesus and Mary.

Let us say three Hail Marys that we may never prefer anything to Jesus and Mary.

Twenty-sixth Day.

THIRTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

THE Apostles together with the Blessed Virgin were gathered together in thanksgiving and supplication when the Holy Ghost descended upon them. Their pious devotion teaches you that the Spirit of God beautifies your souls when you are engaged in prayer. It is not when you are engaged in dissipation or inflated with your own importance, that your bodies become temples of the Holy Spirit; but at mass time, at prayer, in your humility, in your affliction, that He designs to take up His abode with you. When He comes to you, He fills your hearts with His presence and advises you what to accomplish and what to avoid. He imparts that assistance which each one needs. Everyone stands not in need of the same aid. What is beneficial to one, may be injurious to another. Knowing your wants, He bestowes what is necessary for you, and you should be grateful for His favors.

Before His coming, the Apostles were prostrated by fear. They were feeble men without influence in the midst of the enemies of Jesus. They dared not speak their love for Him. They were hushed into

silence by the tortures which their divine Master had endured and dreaded the pains which their praise of Him would incur. In their sorrow and fear they kept secluded, praying for the Holy Spirit Whom Jesus had promised. On the feast of Pentecost He came upon them in the form of tongues of fire; and banished fear while He gave wisdom and fortitude. They were replenished with His gifts. They now were proof against timidity. Wisdom they had to speak most persuasively and touch men's hearts; fortitude to rejoice in disappointments, opposition, and death. Everywhere they preached Jesus crucified with wonderous effects. Go back to Jerusalem and behold the infancy of the Church; then compare its humble condition with the grandeur of Christianity in our day and you will be persuaded of the mighty influence which the Holy Spirit has exerted upon the souls of men. Reflect too upon the countless numbers who in every age were recipients of the Spirit of God and the meritorious effects of His power upon them. Who can estimate the millions who adored Him? Who prayed to Him for enlightenment and strength? Who became living temples of His inspiration and love? The heart of the nun, the piety of the monk, the sanctity of the saint, the wisdom of the scholar, the fortitude of the martyr, were all offered to Him in gratitude for His blessings. In the silence of the soul these prayed. Without pretense, undesirous of praise, unmoved by vanity, untainted by flattery, they offered to Him the purest sentiments of their hearts

and the grandest achievements of their intellects. O, ages of faith and devotion! You have been exchanged for an epoch of greed, insensibility, plunder, and impiety. We have now an age of fakirs and fads, of pompousness in devotion and criticism among worshipers. Many are humble and devout; but many, too, go to church to display the latest fashions or make unfavorable comments about their neighbors. These are unwise in their unlaudable ambition and vain in their worship. Better to be humble. God gives His grace to the humble, but He casts down the proud. There should be no airs in devotion or no pride in one's opulence. With pride and arrogance the Holy Ghost does not dwell. He loves to abide with meekness, humility, and modesty. Every child ought to be taught to love Him, to pray to Him for His gifts; and blessed is that child who has learned to ask Him for counsel.

Since the Holy Spirit entertained the highest esteem for the Blessed Virgin, the child or the youth or the aged, who loves her, will be pleasing to Him. Her whole purpose is to lead people to God. It is not for her own glory she labors; for what honor or greatness can be given her, which God has not already bestowed upon her. The person who venerates her, is drawn by the beautiful influence of devotion and faith to adore the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. There is a medium of grace established between her and her children. Through this medium their veneration reaches her and thereby she teaches them

the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. She lifts up their hearts from the turmoil and slavery of earth; and in her own delightful way directs them to heaven. She is happy in being the Guardian Angel of mankind. Just as her happiest moments on earth were those employed in the service of her divine Son, so the happiest now are those employed in telling the human heart of His love and mercy and benevolence to weak, wavering man. The Holy Spirit blesses those who venerate her. Does not the history of the Church attest this? The holiest men and women, those renowned for sanctity, rejoiced in her friendship and maternal care. The great scholars of the Church whose every prayer was a supplication to the Holy Ghost for enlightenment, guidance, and protection from error, felt safe at her feet. Painters and sculptors and poets whose genius was the gift of the Holy Ghost, exhausted their powers in declaring her motherly affection and depicting her sublime virtue. Where too is the Catholic now who loves God, who does not love Mary? It was from her they first learned the mercy, benignity, and beneficence of God. It was at her altar their souls conceived His goodness, majesty, and fatherly care. Now, since the history of the Church proves that the Holy Spirit conferred upon her children His choicest gifts, should we not imitate the vast number of illustrious persons who were her devout, faithful children? By cherishing a fond veneration for her we are following in the foot-steps of those who were enriched on earth by the

presence of the Holy Spirit and whose path led to heaven. Evidence is not wanting of her influence in the past; and you will admit that you loved God most, when you honored her most. For her kindness to you endeavor to induce others to kneel at her feet, that they may with true piety and sincere devotion kneel at the feet of God.

Deduction: Often ask the Blessed Virgin to help you to love the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. Beg of her to assist you that He and you may be friends; that He may be your teacher, your guide, and the object of all your knowledge,—the center of all your devotions, the light of all your undertakings.

Let us say three Hail Marys, entreating the aid of the Holy Ghost in all our undertakings.

Twenty-seventh Day.

THE THIRTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost Continued.

AMONG the gifts with which the Holy Ghost endowed the apostles, are counsel and fortitude. Every Catholic should often ask the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity for His seven gifts, but especially for these two. He ought to entreat Him not only for these blessings, but also for an everlasting continuance of them. I do not mean only the ability to counsel others, but that the Holy Spirit may ever advise you. There are some persons who have a natural faculty for counseling others ; still they are never able to direct themselves. They can pour out sage advices upon others ; yet they are shipwrecked themselves. They perish upon the bleak, rocky promontories from which their lengthy, prudent counsel ought to protect others. What we should desire, and for what we should pray, is the counsel of the Holy Ghost and the fortitude to abide by that counsel. His advice is unerring, and the virtue of fortitude will enable us to perform what he advises and sail clear of that which is dangerous. His counsel is most beneficial to everyone. No one who wishes to be successful to the end, can dispense with

it. He is the light of every Catholic scholar, the guide of research, the aid of every suppliant, be he farmer, mechanic, teacher, or pupil. The gift of fortitude gives stability to your efforts ; permanence to their results, and an eternal reward for their merits.

In our age, when faith is so feeble in many, when the doctrine of sceptics is so profuse, when there are so many allied against the Church of Christ, the counsel of the Holy Spirit is most necessary. By His guidance your faith will continue steadfast ; you can do much to baffle the schemes of infidels ; and induce others to love and serve Almighty God. Under His directions your failures will be converted into success, your sorrows into joys ; barriers to your advancement will be beaten down, and triumph will accompany your endeavors. Besides peace will attend you. Your desires will be centred in heaven. In all the struggles of life you will offer the troubles of conflict to God and enjoy implicit confidence in Him. Moreover, the supernatural virtue of fortitude will impart serenity and perseverance. This virtue was the strength of the martyrs. It gave courage to the missionary in every land. The Popes, the pilots of the Church, were animated and sustained by it during all the convulsions of so many ages. The whole history of the Church contains evidence of the wonderful co-operation of the Holy Ghost with the promotion of Christianity and the advance of civilization. Should you not, therefore, ask His beneficent gifts that you may always be faithful children of His

Church, firm in opposition, constant in devotion, ever aspiring to noble achievements ; grateful for His blessing and desirous of heaven ?

In the accomplishment of all these things the Blessed Virgin can be of great assistance to you. Her example is a constant teacher. You ought to learn from her. She possesses the friendship of the Holy Ghost in a remarkable degree. He exalted her by His gifts and protected her through her sad, eventful life. Her pious, holy life reflects the gifts of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity ; and if you desire supernatural virtue, you can not do better than imitate her perfection. Many souls are lost, because in early life they were not trained to follow Mary. The devotion and love which they should have had for her, would have kept them from evil companions. No one ever departed from God while kneeling before Mary's altar. The young should be impressed by instruction upon her virtues. They should be drawn near to her that they may never be far from God. It is evident and as lamentable as evident, that many children were never taught to venerate and love her. Had they been, you would not see so many disorders among Catholics, so much irreverence for God, so little piety and so much vice.

Particularly should children preparing for the reception of the sacraments be subdued by love for her. They would then be more attached to God. How often it happens that children preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation have, as some of their chief ob-

jects, the determination to leave their own schools, to refrain from attendance at chatechism, and to do about as they wish. These are pernicious motives and account for the irregularities of their lives after Confirmation. Instead of resolutions to persevere in piety and fidelity to God, their purposes embrace an abandonment of virtue, disregard for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and a determination to ruin themselves. They want to be confirmed, and judging from their motives and after conduct, this means that they intend to despise the teaching of the Holy Spirit ; the exhortations of their pastors, and finally to plunge into ruin. It is essential, then, for parents and teachers to engrave upon their hearts the importance of the sacraments and the necessity of the gifts of God. They must pray, and pray ardently, that the Holy Ghost may bless them and strengthen them with His gifts.

In addition to this the virtues of the Mother of Jesus must be kept constantly before their minds. If they see in her a reflection of those gifts, if they be taught to imitate her virtues, they will receive the Holy Ghost with pure motives. They will not be planning to abandon instruction, but how they can better serve God. If the Blessed Virgin be their incessant companion during the happy days of preparation ; if she accompany them to the altar on the joyous occasion of first Communion and Confirmation, they will be filled with holy fervor. This fervor will awaken noble resolutions, and these resolutions will be the

stability, and permanence, and piety of their future lives.

Deduction: Morning and night beseech the Holy Ghost for His gifts. While walking to work, while returning therefrom, while attending at the adorable sacrifice of the Mass, pray Him to guide you and to increase your devotion to the mother of God.

Let us say three Hail Marys, supplicating the Holy Spirit to bless us with His gifts and the fortitude to exercise them.

Twenty-eighth Day.

THE FOURTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into Heaven.

AFTER a sad, eventful life the Blessed Virgin departed from the scenes of her sorrows and tears to enjoy forever the company of her divine Son. The location of her sepulchre is in doubt. Many think it is at the foot of Mount Olivet. This would be a fitting place, for around this Mount are a cluster of recollections which endeared the spot to her and to all Christians. It is a pious traditionary belief that her body did not remain long in the tomb and that it never suffered from the contagion of the grave. This belief is reasonable, because her sacred body was never contaminated by sin and it was the tabernacle in which the Son of God, for a time, dwelled. It was this body, moreover, which nursed Him, sheltered Him, and provided the necessities of life for Him. It is reasonable, then, to presume that her body was protected from corruption by her divine Son. To think that her body was subject to the ravages of the inmates of the grave, is repugnant both to our sensibilities and our reason.

Her death was like to a child falling asleep in its mother's arms, with this difference, however, that in her case it was the mother reclining to sleep in the

arms of her divine Child. What a blessed death was hers! In the arms of Jesus and surrounded by choirs of angels, she passed from the troubles of earth to the joys of heaven. What ecstasy there was in heaven as the purest human creature entered the Court of Almighty God! What veneration was manifested toward her who was the mother of their Lord and God! What admiration for the grand work of God, revealed in her glorious perfections! The sorrows of earth were transformed into immortal bliss and she was crowned Queen of the Angels.

Should we not ardently pray that our death may be similar to hers? Should not our loftiest aspiration be for the attainment of such a happy privilege? To die as Mary died, ought to be the aim and labors of our lives. It would be a noble ambition,—one which would comport with our eternal destiny, one which would have the approbation of Jesus and the aid of His Blessed Mother. Besides, such ambition would impart tranquillity to our lives, strength to bear the ills thereof, and our last moments on earth would be blessed with confidence in the mercy of God. Ah, if such were our ambition what treasures we would have garnered for the hour of death! How peaceful we would relinquish our souls into the arms of the Creator! What confidence in Mary! What hope in Jesus her Son! At that trying moment thoughts of wealth acquired and of the disposition of that wealth, would not be racking our souls and adding anguish to the pain of dying. It is strange and un-

natural what cunningness, craft, and dishonesty are employed in acquiring lucre which only intensifies the hardship of the couch of death. Fawning, flattery, and friendship are feigned and sold in the mart of gain; and sometimes the only purpose the buyer has in view, is to acquire popularity and praise and influence. He or she may in turn be bought in the same way. If he or she has deceived, may not some other knave be as skillful in decoying his or her wealth? Pause and learn from the Blessed Virgin. She teaches that opulence is not an essential for dying in peace with God, that it has no special claims here on earth to God's blessings, and that it affords no special security for a happy life in the kingdom of God. Reason, experience, the lives and deaths of the saints, all tell us that our great ambition should be to die as Mary died.

One of the best ways to prepare to die as she did, is to imitate her life. By such imitation we please God. Her life was in conformity with His will; hence when we strive to pattern our conduct according to the great virtues which formed her life, we are aiming and toiling to live and die according to the perfect model which He has given us. In this we do not detract from the worship due to God; but only express our admiration for the work of His creation. In truth we can not appreciate the virtues and perfection of Mary sufficiently. Let me illustrate. Supposing a celebrated painter were picturing on canvas the features of some noble, distinguished scion

of earth. Would he not study and bend all his genius to represent on the countenance all the noble virtues which made his subject great and admired? But when the painter has done his best, he falls far short of expressing that perfect concept of these virtues in the intellect of God. Thus also with the Mother of Jesus, when we have admired and appreciated and praised her perfection, our admiration, appreciation, and praise are only feeble testimony of grateful hearts; are meager, weak and childish compared with the perfect knowledge which God has of her perfection. We see with human eyes, we judge with human intellect; He sees the glory of the Blessed Virgin as it is and as He bestowed it upon her. He mantled her in perfection that she may be a tabernacle of beauty and splendor for His divine Son, and undoubtedly He will clothe those in the richness of His grace who love her and model their lives after hers. In the performance of such love and such devotion, you are only modeling yourselves after the perfection of Almighty God; for Mary is but a reflection of her benign Creator. We study and learn Him in the nobility, gentleness, charity, and affection of the noblest creature whom He ever blessed with life.

Deduction: Ask the Blessed Virgin to teach you how to die and beg of her to calm your last moments on earth by her courage-giving presence.

Let us say three Hail Marys that the Blessed Virgin may be our friend in life and in death.

Twenty-ninth Day.

THE FOURTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into Heaven Continued.

THE life of the Blessed Virgin on earth teaches you how you should live and how you should die. She is your great model. You may go to her to learn the beauty and efficiency of every virtue. By studying her life and the inspiring comments made thereon by the saints, you will admire and love her more and be happy in being a child of Mary. Her life is an exalted theme for your contemplation. Constant hope, firm faith, ardent charity, deep humility, tender meekness are all interwoven in that life. A perfect human being was she, an illustrious model for your imitation. Her life on earth points incessantly to heaven ; her life in heaven leads wayfarers on earth continuously to God. From her exalted throne in the kingdom of her divine Son, she looks down with pity and compassion upon you. She feels for your heart-aches and points you for relief to the Sacred Heart of Jesus ; or she bears the tear-stained messages of your weeping hearts to Him Who never refused her a favor. Since a sword of grief pierced her own heart, she knows how to sym-

pathize with disappointment and sorrow. In your grief go to her. You will have her sympathy and prayers; and in your confiding trust in her, you will be nearer the Sacred Heart of Jesus than you ever were before. Ah, but if in grief she be your friend, do not forget her in your joys. If from the depths of your breaking hearts your supplications plead for deliverance, do not be unmindful of her when these hearts are brimming with delight. If sorrow leads you to her, let not happiness mar your love for her or destroy that friendship which sprang from affliction and her gentle, condescending aid.

Everyone of you should wear her scapular. It would be a proof of her constant protection and your love for her. It is a badge of virtue and the insignia of grateful hearts. With this emblem of your veneration and her perpetual care, you would be in closer communion with her, you would declare more affectionately your attachment to her, and be better guarded and more enriched by her prayers. By this mark of devotion you would show in a special manner your love and gratitude to her; and she would reciprocate your love while she would have a greater interest in your temporal and eternal welfare.

You ought also have a rosary beads and carry it with you wherever you go. On the way to your employment you could say a decade and while returning from work say another decade. Thus you would begin your toil and end it by entwining Hail Marys into a wreath for the brow of your Queen. How happy

Mary would be with your fidelity and devotion ! She would assist you all day long, encourage you when fatigue is heavy and labor oppressive. Yea, you would then be truly children of Mary and she would be proud of you. She would never forsake you. How could she ? Her scapular is on your breast and her rosary is your companion. Ah, in sorrow she would assuage your grief, caress your troubled hearts, and dry the tears of disappointment ! With her aid the trials of life are deprived of their bitterness and the Child of Mary makes them promoters of eternal joys. Ah, at the hour of death the long carried scapular and the much used rosary have their influence. With what confidence and hope the possessor of these sacred tokens of Mary's friendship gazes upon the scapular and rosary. They have been friends to the Child of Mary for many and many a year. How often the heart beat under the scapular with love for Mary, how often it was troubled and in its troubles how many a sigh heaved the bosom which bore the scapular. Mary will not forget those sighs or be unmindful of that devotion and confidence which made her child so loving and confiding. Mary will be at the death couch of her child, just as she was at the foot of the cross. She never deserts affection and attachment. When almost everyone deserted her divine Son she was with Him. When father and mother, sister and brother can give no solace to her dying children, she is with them, assuring them of her love and calming their last

moments by her gentle, soul-inspiring whispers of love and fidelity.

She looks upon the scapular and rosary, those endearing emblems of devotion to her and she directs the thoughts of her dying child to them, that her child may draw comfort and hope from passed friendship and passed, fervent prayer. Mary brings to mind of her child the number of times he knelt at the foot of her statue, the crowns of Hail Marys he had woven in his heart for his Mother and Queen, and then says to his heart: "Do you think I would forsake you who was so kind, who was so devoted to me and God? These pale, thin fingers have often tolled the beads in ardent love for me; these white, parched lips have often whispered Hail Marys to me; this weak, trembling heart has loved me and I know how often it has pulsated in loving prayer to me. Do you think I would desert you now? Are you afraid lest I would not now listen to the sighs of this faithful, agitated heart? Child be of good cheer. I love you with the love of a mother. Jesus loves you. A little more struggle, a little more suffering and your soul will be as pure as an angel, and you will be with me in the kingdom of God." Ah, much sweeter and more compassionate will be Mary's gentle words than these. No tongue can ever express the tenderness and love with which the Blessed Virgin soothes the dying hearts of her devout children. From her throne in heaven she watches faithful and guards wearilessly during life her child. At the hour

of death she bends kindly over the wasting form of that child and whispers words of hope while she tells the heart of the mercy and love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Deduction : Have a scapular and rosary. These are pledges of your fidelity to Mary and guarantees of her help during life, and of her aid and the aid of her divine Son at the hour of death.

Let us say three Hail Marys for a happy death with Jesus and Mary at our bedside.

Thirtieth Day.

THE FIFTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Heaven.

HEAVEN itself has had its memorable events. Among the most remarkable known to man were the departure of the Son of God to garb Himself in human flesh; the descent of the Holy Ghost to sanctify and confirm the Apostles, and the crowning of the Blessed Virgin. All these celestial acts were for the ennoblement of the human race. Human reason can not fathom the depths of God's love for man in these acts nor comprehend the glory bestowed upon Mary at her coronation. Consider that it was Almighty God Who prepared heaven for this glorious event, that His resources are infinite, that the splendor and pomp of kings, that the magnificence of the sky at night and the grandeur of the earth by day are incomparable to the glory which surrounds Him. If the Incarnation of the Son of God. His birth in a manger, His death upon the cross, are incomprehensible to the human intellect; and above and beyond everything which the genius of man would have predicted, what mind then, can grasp or understand the glories attending the coronation of the Queen of heaven. If the Son of God could subjugate Himself

to the humility and debasement of a stable, with what glory was the Blessed Virgin exalted above her humility and debasement on earth. Since she was His mother and partner in the degradation heaped upon Him by man, she is His mother and partner in the grandeur, glory, and joys of His eternal mansions. From the depths of lowliness to which Himself and she descended, He raised her to the highest height of glory.

What rejoicement among the angels and saints as she was crowned their Queen. How happy they must have been to bear her from the afflictions of earth to the palace prepared by the eternal Father for them and for her. They must have rejoiced at her crowning; and even though it was heaven, some superior ecstasy must have filled their joys with unusual rapture when they beheld her divine Son welcome her to His celestial home and crown her with a diadem fashioned by infinite genius. The humiliation of the Son of God on the cross is beyond your comprehension, so is the exaltation of His Blessed Mother. We may wish to picture her glory, the splendor of her crown, the affection and love of the angels for her; still the best picture which the purest imagination can paint, is finite, is limited; but the munificence of the Court of heaven at her coronation was prearranged by unlimited power and infinite wealth.

Still, though Queen of Angels and next to her divine Son in glory, how interested she is in the human race. Her wonderful love for mankind, her marvelous aid to the human race, induce the Church to style

her Refuge of Sinners, Comforter of the Afflicted, and Help of Christians. She is not only the Queen of Angels but also the spiritual mother of the human race. You venerate her because she is the mother of the Son of God. You love her for all her beneficence to you. She is truly the refuge of sinners and the consolation of saints. How many a sinner has implored: "Refuge of sinners, pray for me!" When the heart was heavy, when friends proved treacherous, when sin had made life unbearable and the path of life rugged and thorny, the sinner found a friend in Mary and from the depths of his tormented heart entreated: "Refuge of sinners, pray for me, give me courage, and beg your divine Son to have mercy upon me, a sinner!" She calmed his troubled heart while she pointed to the cross. She said to his agitated soul: "Look at your Savior bleeding at the cross. Behold His thorn crowned head, His lacerated body, His hands pierced by nails, His sacred heart giving forth the last drop of its blood for sinners. All this suffering, all this cruelty tell you how much He loves you. Come now, go to confession. I shall accompany you. I am your friend. By the power intrusted to the priest by your Redeemer, every sin will be forgiven you and you will be happy in the friendship of your God." Ah, who can describe the kindness, the gentleness, the affection with which she has spoken to hearts of sinners. No wonder the Church calls her the Refuge of Sinners. No wonder that you love her and beseech her to pray for you.

In the morning of your life she was happy when she saw you with pure, innocent aspirations welcome in Holy Communion her divine Son into your hearts. She was overjoyed at the reception you gave Jesus, she prayed for you, she lavished upon your souls all her caresses. What purity, what affection were in your devotion in those happy days of peace and innocence! With clasped hands, with fervent souls, with hearts brimming with love, you begged her to be always your friend! When the Holy Ghost descended into your souls in the sacrament of confirmation, she again rejoiced at all the blessings He poured into your hearts. She knowing the influence of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, thanked Him for His graciousness to you. You should never forget the blessings conferred upon you by the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. You should often remember the day upon which your souls were honored by His graces; and thank Him again and again for His gifts. How the Blessed Virgin taught you in those early happy, happy days to love and ever worship the Third Person of the Adorable Trinity! She spoke to your hearts as no other human being can. She knows God's love for you, she knows the paradise He has for you, she sees the beauty and the glory of heaven, and she implores you to avoid sin that you may enjoy the majesty and love of your God forever. How gently and lovingly she ingratiated herself into your hearts when life was innocent and sorrow a stranger to you! Nor does she now abandon you. She is still your truest friend

after God. She does not forget your early prayers, she is not unmindful of the morning you received first Holy Communion, of the rosaries you have said, of the confidence you had in her, of your tender devotion to her. She remembers all these. She is still your mother and your Queen.

Deduction: Continue to love Mary. Make little offerings to the poor in her honor. Ask her to be with you at the hour of your death.

Let us say three Hail Marys, asking Mary to lead us to heaven.

Thirty-first Day.

THE FIFTEENTH MYSTERY.

The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Continued.

MY DEAR BRETHREN: On this last evening of May the Blessed Virgin undoubtedly looks graciously down from her throne in heaven upon you. She appreciates the devotion you have shown her during this long expected month. During the long, dreary winter you looked forward with earnest expectation to the month now closing: May is for you a beautiful month and one of its chief sources of beauty and hope arises from the memories of Mays which are dead. This delightful month is rich in recollections of your visits in other Mays to the shrine of your Queen; and this month now departing adds to those affectionate memories. By your devotion, by Hail Marys you have crowned the brow of your friend and Queen with a garland of prayer. She was crowned in heaven by her divine Son, and angels gazed in mute admiration and love upon her glorious coronation; but you have wreathed her brow with the jewels of prayer and affection. No doubt, even angels have wondered at your fealty and love. Every evening you have here knelt at the foot of her altar and offered her the flowers of your soul. While both

the candles burning upon her altar and the roses thereon, indicated your faith and your love, from your hearts and souls arose the incense of purest affection and deepest gratitude to her.

If she is the Refuge of Sinners, what will she be to you who honor her and adore her divine Son. She will be the Morning Star as the church so eloquently styles her. She will be the morning star of your ambition and hope and at the hour of death she will impart confidence to you. She certainly will not forsake you in your needs, who have been so devout to her during this month. As you now look back upon your visits to Mary's altar during this May, what joy and peace are in these recollections. You are glad now that you thus honored her. Mary, the morning star of faith, has enticed you hither ; and coming to venerate her, you knelt before Jesus in the tabernacle, thanking him for the friendship and protection of His mother and begging Him for the grace to always remain faithful to her. You see Mary draws you and draws millions to adore God. Devotion to her impels you gently, yet irresistibly to the feet of her divine Son.

Her rosary is a perpetual review of the part she took in the Redemption of the human race, of the infinite love and mercy and sufferings of Jesus, and the power and efficacy of the Holy Ghost. It leads you to the manger, it induces you to kneel on Calvary's summit, it recalls the struggles of the early church, and concludes with the coronation of your Queen and mother by her divine Son. What a history ! How

fruitful in Christian culture ! How efficient in civilization ! How hopeful in the promises of Christ. Many and many a weary finger has tolled the beads of the rosary ; many and many a sorrowful heart has said the Hail Marys ; and everyone of her children has derived from this devotion relief and perseverance. Ah, but what will be their reward beyond the grave. None suffered more than Mary, but she was crowned in the presence of all the heavenly Court. Thus also with her weary, careworn children. When life's burden will have been laid down, they too will be crowned in the kingdom of God. The weariness of life, its disappointments and sorrows keep you nearer Jesus and Mary. It is the ills of life which draw you to pray, prayer preserves the friendship of God in your souls, and this friendship will deck your brows for all eternity where Mary will be your Queen.

The rosary is a most efficacious means of salvation, for it constantly reminds you of God's mercies; and the sufferings of Jesus teach you of His love, and this love engenders gratitude in your souls, and this gratitude makes you children of Jesus and Mary. During this month your attention has been called to this instructive, edifying, culturing prayer. You have laid the laurels of your love and devotion at her feet. Your supplication has risen to her and she has blessed you a thousand times for your confidence in her. While expressing your love for her, while kneeling at her altar in affection and entreaty, you forgot not the Sacred Heart of Jesus. You

turned to Him in the sacrament of His love, and implored Him that you may always have the profoundest love and attachment for Him, and that He may bless you with His friendship and protection. You thanked Him again and again for that joy with which He filled your souls in the morning of your first communion and begged Him to remain with you to the end of life's journey, that you may be eternally happy with Him. May every prayer you uttered during this month, impart joy during your whole life ; may your supplication always find favor with Jesus and Mary ; may they protect you during life ; and at your last moments on earth may they make you tranquil and happy !

Deduction : Be faithful to the rosary, and Jesus and Mary will always be your friends.

Let us say three Hail Marys in thanksgiving to God for the blessings of this month.

SERMONS

FOR EVERY SUNDAY IN THE YEAR.

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Letter of the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Erie.

ERIE, PA.

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† JOHN E. FITZMAURICE,
Bishop of Erie.

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N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

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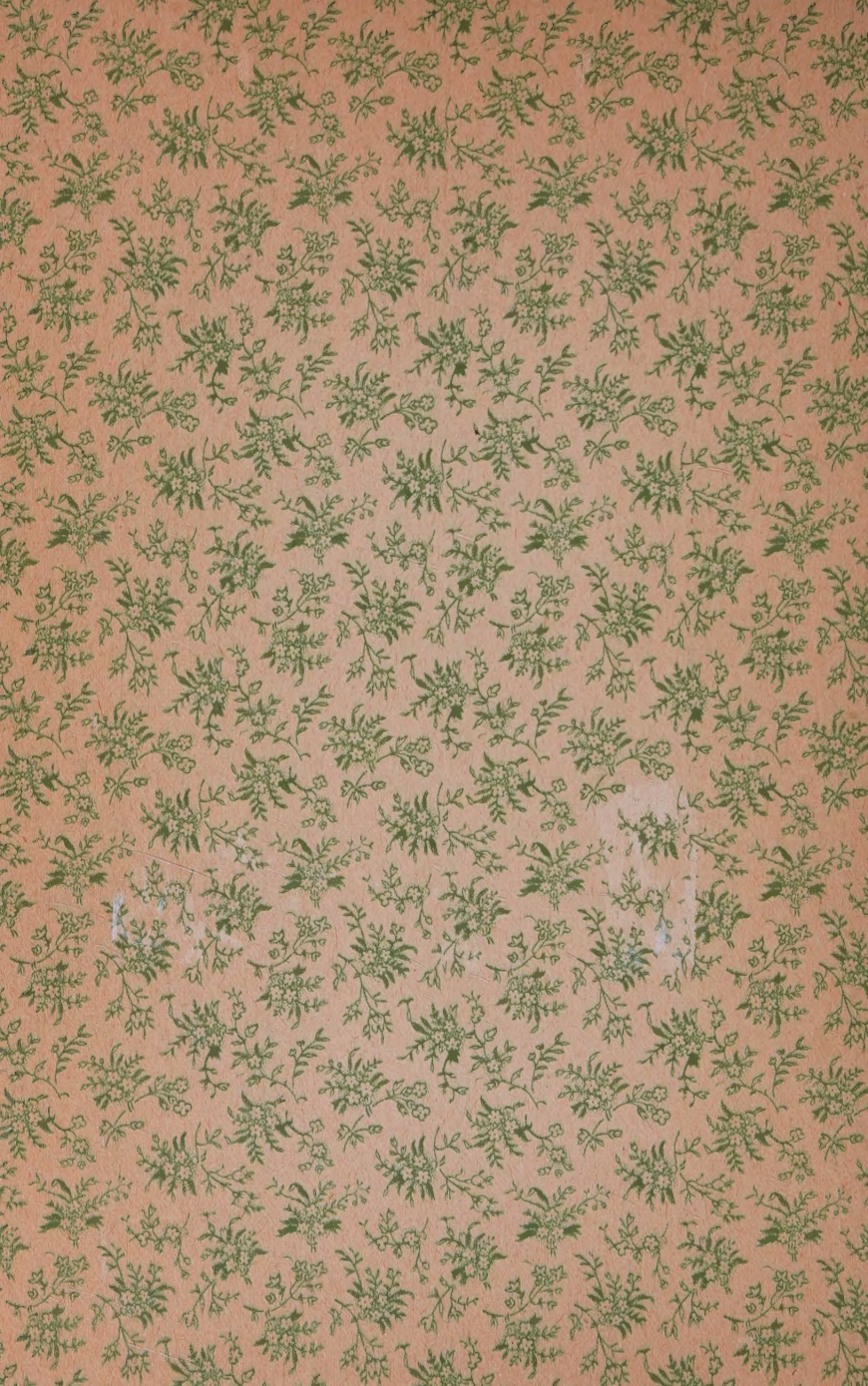
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